

GENERAL JOSEPH WHEELER AND
THE ARMY OF TENNESSEE





Joseph Wheeler

MAJ.-GEN. C. S. A. AND CHIEF OF CAVALRY

GENERAL JOSEPH WHEELER
AND
THE ARMY OF TENNESSEE

BY

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IN HONOR OF
JOSEPH EGGLESTON JOHNSTON
GENERAL C. S. A.
OF
JOSEPH WHEELER
MAJOR-GENERAL C. S. A.
CHIEF OF CAVALRY
AND OF
THE OFFICERS AND SOLDIERS OF WHEELER'S CORPS

In Affectionate Memory of My Four
Brothers, Youths, Members of that Corps

LIEUTENANT JAMES HENRY DuBOSE, JR.
Killed in Battle

PRIVATE EUGENE DuBOSE
Killed in Battle

PRIVATE FRANCIS MARION DuBOSE
Died in Military Hospital

PRIVATE NICHOLAS WILLIAMS DuBOSE
Survivor

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GENERAL JOSEPH WHEELER AND THE ARMY OF TENNESSEE

BACKGROUND

A UNION OF NULLIFYING STATES—A CONFEDERACY OF
SECEDING STATES—GEORGE MASON OF GUNSTON—
SOUTHERN SLAVERY SELF-EXTINGUISHING—ABRA-
HAM LINCOLN—JEFFERSON DAVIS—THE WALKER
TARIFF—A LAND AUTOCRACY—THE CAVALRY OF
THE CONFEDERACY.

“The Fates were against us”—the southern Confederacy. The waiting anxiety of history is for the true story of the collision of the Fates with the veritable fact of the Confederacy.

The phenomenal energies of the American sectional conflict were undoubtedly the reflex of the education two generations had received, in common, in the enlightened principles of American civics.

The form and theories of federal government adopted by the thirteen nations was essentially an agreement between two geographical sections, distinguished from each other by habits of thought among the people, by pursuits of industry and by hereditary political prejudices.

The degree of intended conservation of original rights of the respective states, parties to the Federal compact, may be ascertained by reference to the recorded action of those several parties in their respective independent acceptances of the instrument of compact or Constitution. North Carolina, at first, refused by popular vote even to call a convention to consider the question of adopting the Philadelphia Constitution. The population of the state then was confined

for the most part to the eastern counties. A Methodist circuit-riding preacher industriously rode through the settlements, warning the voters that if the state adopted the federal government an army would come down from New York to subjugate them. North Carolina and Rhode Island held aloof for two years after Washington became President and Congress legislated, in recognition of the independence of those states. Virginia and New York, earnestly hesitating, finally accepted the new government, with codicil attached to the act in each case reserving the right, unquestioned, to resume state independence at discretion. Thus two states in each section—nearly one-third of the whole number—came into the federal government with assertions of superior *original* and retained sovereignty within themselves.

War, so magnificent, protracted and exhaustive, must remain a distinct and absorbing feature of American history. No approach to that American military history may be made in forgetfulness of the temper of the people who precipitated the great conflict.

Within two generations of the constitutional form, the majority section, the north, found itself face to face with the restraint placed by the compact upon the natural rights of numbers. Northern senators, listening to Calhoun's explanations of the constitutional theory of protection of the minority, one asked the other: "What is to be the answer to that?" "There can be no answer," was the reply. The majority section gave way, became resentful and intolerant. The minority section, the south, appealed to the letter and spirit of the compact. The leader of the majority answered the appeal with chafing words: "There is a higher law than the Constitution." A leader only less discreet pronounced the Constitution "a league with hell and a covenant with the devil."

Appomattox was not a Waterloo. President Lincoln forbade a Waterloo. His marvelous wisdom in the moment of crisis rose to an appreciation of the American situation. The terms of surrender of the Confederate armies were

dictated by him. Under those terms the original form of federal government and of state government were perpetuated, unscathed in any particular, by the victory over Confederate arms.

The Committee on Form had received and retired with the completed draft of the Constitution "for" the United States of America. The instrument, in the form submitted, was a frank, unambiguous compromise entered into between the navigating (northern) states and the agricultural (southern) states.

The features of the compromise were: (1) The northern majority in Congress should not pass navigation laws, but all navigation (commercial) laws should receive a two-third vote; (2) to balance this concession on the part of the north, the south agreed that Congress should have unrestricted control, by a majority vote, over the institution of slavery, upon which at that time the prosperity of southern agriculture depended; (3) the better to give permanency to the compromise, by removing cause for political agitation, the president was elected for a term of seven years, without re-eligibility. This perfected original draft of the Constitution was recalled from committee and the whole question of sectional compromise reopened.¹

The basis of the federal government was finally agreed upon between the sections on the following features of compromise: (1) Navigation laws should require only a majority of Congress; (2) Congress should not tax exports, nearly all initiating at that time in the agricultural or southern states; (3) African slave trade should not be prohibited "prior" to 1808. Rhode Island and Massachusetts, of the states, alone engaged in it, and the better to secure the trade unmolested, "a tax not exceeding ten dollars for each person" so imported must be the limit;² (4)

¹Memorandum of George Mason, in *Life and Times of John M. Mason*.

²The authority of Congress, with its northern majority, being made permanent to enact navigation laws, the slave trade lost in this feature of the compromise if it was restricted by the word "prior" to the year 1808. Good lawyers contended that a constitutionally legalized branch of commerce, especially protected up to 1808, could not be destroyed after 1808 except by amendment of the organic law in the premises.

the term of the president was reduced from seven to four years, and ineligibility to succeed himself, which was supposed to be an indirect guarantee of the operation of the compromise, was surrendered to the control of the majority, with power to use the quadrennial election to continue the same man in the office indefinitely; (5) in order to protect the north against the political effect of increase of population in the south by the African slave trade, the south agreed to eliminate two-fifths of the slaves from apportionment for representation and direct taxation in the federal government; (6) in order to protect the south from hazard of repurchase of its own slaves on the market, the north agreed (Art. IV, Sec. 2, Par. 3): "No Person held to Service or Labour in one State Under the Laws thereof, escaping into another, shall, in Consequence of any Law or Regulation therein, be discharged from such Service or Labour, but shall be delivered up on Claim of the Party to whom such Service or Labour shall be due."

In the period of the American revolution, a British subject residing in the British West Indies carried with him his negro slave valet on a visit to Scotland. After many months' sojourn there the valet, faithful throughout, was ordered to prepare for his master's and his own return. He protested. He was on the free soil of Great Britain. The Scotch Court, fourteen judges sitting, sustained the plea of the negro by a majority vote.

From this case, and the general activity and propaganda of Exeter Hall School, there sprang up in New England a vehement opposition to the fugitive slave proviso of the Constitution and the laws and decrees of the federal courts, intended to enforce and interpret that proviso. Enactments and interpretations in the premises began as early as Washington's first term, 1793, and continued until Buchanan's, 1857. The words of the statutes and the decrees of the courts sustained the compromise feature of the proviso. Massachusetts led off early in 1840 with statutes making it a felony for her citizens to assist in the surrender of a fugitive slave to his master. In twenty years, fourteen of

the northern states had duplicated, in effect, the revolutionary statutes of Massachusetts. In more recent years, a Kansas senator, on the floor of Congress, W V Allen, declared from his place that among the incidents of his life most revered by him was the circumstance that, when a lad of sixteen, in his native state, Ohio, he was an active member of a voluntary association of his neighbors known as the "Underground Railroad," which maintained agencies for enticing slaves from the south and facilitating their escape to Canada.³ This was in the 1850's, when nearly all the northern states were in a condition of practical revolution, their governors, legislators and elective courts of law in avowed sympathy with the Underground Railroad. The south contended that the systematized theft of slaves from her bounds impaired or destroyed the quota of political influence apportioned to her by the Constitution in the federal government by lessening her apportionable population; that the invasion of her institutions by outlaws did not "establish the justice" or "insure the domestic tranquillity" which the states had pledged themselves to provide by means of a government in common.

While the whole north was as a seething cauldron of excitement, ostensibly over the humanitarian, really the superficial, view taken of slavery, the effect of the institution upon the southern mind and habits of society became more intense.

Early in the 1850's Charles Sumner succeeded Daniel Webster in the Senate, because of Webster's rebuke of the abolition or revolutionary movement. Mr. Sumner was a man of rare accomplishments of mind and manners. Yet a well known abolitionist, however brilliant in society, could have no place in the dominating southern element, political and social, in Washington. He was tabooed, and finally assaulted and driven out. At one of the hotels, on Pennsylvania Avenue, a colony of select southern gentlemen, senators and representatives, their wives and daughters,

³Cong. Record.

lived. Their boast was that no "free-soiler, abolitionist or bloomer" could enter there; that sort "must go to the other side of the street."⁴

In 1857 Senator Jefferson Davis, touring New England in the summer recess of Congress, was introduced to a full audience at Faneuil Hall, Boston, by an eminent son of Massachusetts, Caleb Cushing. Mr. Cushing remarked in his introductory address, that if the United States happened to be then at war with France or any foreign power, the average citizen of Massachusetts would hate the enemy far less than he hated any southern man entitled to the confidence and respect of his fellow citizens of Massachusetts.

In the ten years from 1851 to 1861, inclusive, four northern men held successively the office of president: Millard Fillmore, of New York, Whig and Abolitionist; Franklin Pierce, of New Hampshire, Jeffersonian Democrat; James Buchanan, National Democrat; and Abraham Lincoln, of Illinois. Within these ten years the argument upon which the Confederacy was founded matured. The first three of the four presidents named sympathized with the south, in official papers, and condemned the north in its course of revolution.

A gentleman of Charleston, S. C., heard of the harboring in Boston of his man-slave, a fugitive. The legal procedures for his arrest were satisfied and the United States marshal took the man into custody, presenting him before the United States commissioner's court at Boston for the legal preliminaries to his rendition. A mob of the town organized and, rushing into the presence of the court, where the fugitive was held, abducted and released him. President Fillmore, in profound mortification, stated the event and the incidents to Congress.

The president said to Congress: "Nullification is not now aimed so much at particular laws (meaning the fugitive slave laws) as against the Constitution itself, and it is not to be disguised that a spirit exists, and

⁴A Belle of the 'Fifties.

has been actively at work, to rend asunder the Union," etc.⁵

Referring to the intensifying spirit of nullification in the northern states, President Pierce appealed to them through official utterance to Congress. "It has been," he said, "matter of painful regret to see states conspicuous for services in founding this republic, and equally sharing its advantages, disregard their Constitutional obligations to it.

While the people of the southern states confine their attention to their own affairs, not presuming officially to intermeddle with the social affairs of the northern states, too many of the inhabitants of the latter are permanently organized in associations to inflict injury on the former by wrongful acts, which would be cause of war as between foreign powers and only fail to be such in our system because perpetrated under cover of the Union."⁶

President Fillmore announced in the most solemn words that the New England states had designs upon the life of the Constitution and the integrity of the Union. His successor, of another political faith, repeated the accusation, declaring as a logical result the south might go to war but for "cover of the Union." The history of opinion in the executive department of the government advances, *pari passu*.

The last of the presidents of the pivotal ten years, James Buchanan, by formal message to Congress informed the country, "no power was delegated to Congress to coerce a state.

So far from this power having been delegated to Congress, it was expressly refused by the convention that framed the Constitution.

Mr. Madison opposed it in a brief but powerful speech," etc. Bringing this most solemn state paper to a climax, the president said: "The injured states (of the south), having first used all peaceful and Constitutional means to obtain redress, would be justified in revolutionary (*sic*) resistance to the government of the Union." Mr. Buchanan's

⁵Messages and Papers of the Presidents, V. 138.

⁶*Ibid.*

utterance was thirty days after his election to the presidency, in 1860.⁷

Lincoln's election! No phenomenon in the annals of free government stands counterpart to the startling claim. Mr. Lincoln was one of four candidates. The convention that nominated Lincoln was composed of delegates from seventeen states, fourteen of which were disqualified, as we shall see, by precedent from participation in the election of a president. Fourteen of the seventeen states were of that offending class denounced as revolutionists, successively, by Presidents Fillmore, Pierce and Buchanan, representatives of all law-abiding phases of public opinion in the Union. The Chicago Convention of 1860 was not, in fact or aspiration, a national convention. Here were thirty-three states of the Union. Only seventeen of these were invited or desired, and they did not go in a responsible or respectable way.

We shall go back a little, merely to seek the only defined status of a nullifying state, fixed by act of Congress and the sanction of Andrew Jackson, president. The third department, the judiciary, was not invoked.

We have "Webster's Great Reply to Hayne," so advertised in the school-books, delivered in the Senate March 20th, 1830. Up to that time, since the general election of 1800, the dominating politics had been of the Jeffersonian school. The Jeffersonian doctrine was the government. West Point taught it. A reversion of opinion now set in. Senator Webster received a part of his income from the cotton mills. The election (?) of Lincoln followed.

Jefferson's teaching was, that whereas the functions of the federal government resided in three separate but co-ordinate departments, legislative, executive and judicial, without authority in any one to assert a determinate power of control, the determinate power necessarily remained with the creator of the government, the separate states.

As a logical result of Webster's recent contention, to the contrary of Jeffersonian doctrine, on March 2d, 1833, Con-

⁷Messages and Papers of the President, V, 650.

gress passed an act, ostensibly to collect federal revenues.⁸ The bill was reported by Felix Grundy, senator from Tennessee, from a special committee of which he was chairman and Mr. Webster a member, the bill supposed to be the work of the latter, as it reflected the political dogma announced in his reply to Hayne.

The act of March 2d, 1833, was intended to suppress, by coercion, the threat of South Carolina to nullify certain legislation of Congress upon which no judicial pronouncement had been made and for which no express authority could be found in the Constitution; merely a federal tax known as the "Bill of Abominations," the tariff of 1828. In its essential character, nullification by South Carolina, in 1832, was an extremely moderate exercise, a protest only, as compared with the puncture of the federal authority made by the nullifying demonstrations of the fourteen states that elected (?) Lincoln in 1860.

Under the act of March 2d, 1833, General Scott went to Charleston with troops. The act invested the president, or his military representatives, with absolute authority over life, liberty and property in South Carolina. For example, it was under this act that President Jackson threatened to "hang" the nullifier senator, John C. Calhoun. The act practically, with premeditation, abolished all civil authority and the exercise of all civil rights in a nullifying state. It did not name the state of South Carolina. Indeed, at the passage of the bill and until nine months later, no ordinance of nullification was enacted by that state. Congress laid down the principle, and Andrew Jackson, president, endorsed it, that nullification is treason against the United States and reduces the state to the penalty of civil extinction.

The act of March 2d, 1833, remains in its intent and character. It expired by limitation March 2d, 1834. Before the date of expiration, Mr. Calhoun from his place in the Senate made a very earnest and eloquent effort to have it repealed, in order that it should not stand in the

⁸United States Revised Statutes.

history of the country, honored as a precedent. Congress declined to repeal the act.*

The campaign preceding the general election of November, 1860, was extremely vigorous. The candidates for president were Abraham Lincoln, on a platform demanding restoration of the dishonored high protective tariff tax, known as the Clay "American System," which the protest of South Carolina had, in effect, repealed, and announcing hostility to slavery; John C. Breckinridge, candidate of the majority of the slave states; Stephen A. Douglas, nominee of the remaining part of the National Democratic Convention of 1860 that did not participate in the nomination of Breckinridge, and John Bell, of Tennessee, nominated by a small band of old-time Whigs.

The polls pronounced judgment November 4th, 1860. The election turned on the claims of Lincoln against the field. The field defeated Lincoln by 430,159 votes. He received 1,886,352 votes. The combined vote of the other three candidates was 2,316,501.

Illogically, Mr. Lincoln appealed to the federal Constitution. He received a majority of electoral colleges, each state with one college. He received one hundred and eighty votes from the colleges, fourteen of which, under the unrepealed act of March 2d, 1832, were in a state of treason, disqualified for the exercise of any civil function.

If Mr. Breckinridge, who received the highest electoral vote from states in good standing in the Union, had claimed the office, and carried his claims to the courts, the unrepealed act of March 2d, 1832, must have been construed, at least the constitutionality of the principle must have been determined. If the court maintained the principle of the act, then Breckinridge was the president legally elected; if the court denied the principle of the act, the southern Confederacy was a valid government. If fourteen northern states might be in the Union and without, at one and the same time, with power to elect (?) a president over all, to clinch that proposition, then eleven southern states might reason-

*Works of Calhoun, vol. II.

ably be held to be within their reserved rights in withdrawing, without prejudice to the rights of the fourteen nullifiers.

Mr. Lincoln promptly resolved on war. In none of the many situations of Napoleon, for twenty years, was war a more imperious necessity to his power than the same expedient now was to the president of the United States. His mental acuteness was equal to Napoleon's, his courage as pronounced, his deliberation as careful; he was the only man in the United States whose vision seemed to reach through and over the whole political situation—the free states ripe for limitless fermentation and unfathomable radicalism; the slave states calm, contented with their own and firm in their demands for independence.

The independence of the Confederacy was not the question with which Mr. Lincoln was most concerned. Northern sympathy with the new republic was positive. What should be done to liberate the government at Washington from imminent jeopardy of the expanding sympathy of the northern people with the government at Montgomery?¹⁰

¹⁰The peculiar character of Abraham Lincoln has not been accounted for in the environment and accidents of his infancy and youth, as far as they relate to the influence of the western wilds amidst which he was reared. He possessed a native force of mind and a strength of character not traceable to his assumed humble parentage or the conditions about him prior to his entrance upon the office of president. Recent inquiry into his antecedents has been reliable and exhaustive. The Hanks name came to Massachusetts from England long before the Revolution, and the men bearing it made respectable citizens and were supporters of the cause of independence. From Massachusetts some of the number settled in Amelia county, Virginia. From Virginia John, James, Joseph and Luke Hanks, the latter a youth, settled in Anderson district, South Carolina, about 1787. Everywhere the name migrated; the men bought land and prospered. Luke married in South Carolina, and his daughter Nancy, a handsome young woman, kept an inn at Craytonsville on the highway between Abbeville court-house and Pendleton court-house. Lawyers riding the circuit of the courts stopped at the inn. Abraham Enloe, a horse drover, brought his hired man, Tom Lincoln, from North Carolina with horses to sell. Tom Lincoln was sent to Kentucky, as guide and protector of Nancy Hanks, riding a horse across the wilderness. Nancy went to live with an uncle in Kentucky. Soon after arrival she gave birth to a son and called him Abraham, a Hanks family name. Ultimately she married Tom Lincoln, a clumsy, rude fellow.—D. J. KNOTTS, in *Columbia* (S. C.) *State*, April 9, 1911. Also first edition of Herndon's *Life of Lincoln*, suppressed.

When Mr. Lincoln took office, the political questions on which his party relied were the very antithesis of a normal political faith in the south—high protective tariff and precipitate emancipation of slaves. But this kind of anti-southern politics had to contend with very great northern interests. The main commerce of the United States then was marine. The southern states supplied about \$180,000,000 of the material against about \$5,000,000 from the north. The north owned the bottoms, and the marine commerce enjoyed by that section was second only to England and nearly as great.

The "yard stick democracy," the business interests, soon began to reflect. President-elect Lincoln reflected seriously.

January 6, 1861, Mayor Wood, of New York, called the municipal council together and argued bravely for the secession of the city and for an alliance with some southern state. The mayor and council of Boston and twenty-two thousand citizens of Massachusetts, presented a petition to the states of the United States against war with the south. Edward Everett, late Union candidate for vice-president, a leading abolitionist, a senator and renowned orator, addressing a peace meeting at Faneuil Hall, exclaimed: "To attempt to hold fifteen states in the Union by force is preposterous." Horace Greely dispatched a special correspondent of his newspaper, the *New York Tribune*, to Springfield to interview the president-elect. "I will suffer death," responded Mr. Lincoln, "before I will consider or advise my friends to consent to any concession." Senator Crittenden, from Kentucky, offered a resolution that a vote of the whole people, north and south, be taken immediately, to determine upon a settlement of the sectional dispute. Senator Bigler, from Pennsylvania, submitted a similar resolution. The Senate took no action. Hearing of these motions, January 8th, 1861, President Buchanan, in deep consternation, sent a special message to Congress. "In Heaven's name," he cried, "let the trial be made before we plunge into armed conflict, upon the mere assumption that there is no other alternative."

February 11th Mr. Lincoln set out for Washington.

He traveled slowly through Illinois, Indiana, Ohio, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, listening attentively, observing shrewdly.

Rumor reached him that when the electoral vote, as by law ordained, should be counted February 15th, violence would intervene to arrest the count and provide another way of filling the office. Rumor induced Mr. Lincoln's friends to send a detective in advance to disappoint real or imaginary assassins. The candidate of suspected claims on the office arrived, clandestinely, at his journey's end, in partial disguise and well guarded, at night.

"I shall run the machine as I find it," exclaimed the new incumbent of the presidency. The machine, left to untrained hands, was very near collapse.

The new president was not a popular man. No men of established character trusted him. Mr. Seward, the astute secretary of state, proposed a foreign war. The Confederacy, now only seven cotton states, Texas having joined, would fall to pieces as the foreign foot pressed American soil, he said. Next, the secretary proposed to govern the country in the name of the president.

Mr. Lincoln was not a welcomed great man. The political whirlpool exposed him. The catastrophic sleeping energies of the whole American people were destined to show the world what he was. None believed until then.

The president of the United States resolved to rescue the government at Washington from the pending disintegration. He might lose Virginia, Kentucky, Tennessee, Missouri, not yet seceded, by war upon the Confederacy. His alert sagacity taught him that a president elected by states in nullification, that a candidate for the presidency who had been defeated at the polls by nearly half a million votes, must bring promptly and decisively into the situation some new and startling procedure of universal and conclusive interest. Leader was never more appreciative nor resourceful than this one. Mr. Lincoln sent G. V. Fox, assistant secretary of the navy, a wily New Englander, ostensibly to arrange for the prompt evacuation of Sumter. Governor Pickens let him in. Fox returned rapidly, called at the

White House, and hastened on to New York, where the president's ships were nearly ready to sail with provisions and reinforcements for Sumter. A few days later, Lamon, long an intimate of Lincoln's, and recently appointed by him United States marshal of the District of Columbia, and commissioned special guardian of the president's person, arrived at Charleston. Pickens gave the unscrupulous emissary a pass to Sumter. Lamon, on his return to the city, modestly intimated that his government might prefer to dispatch a war-ship to remove the garrison. In evidence of good faith, he presented to the governor and to General Beauregard, as if from Seward, an unsigned and undated memorandum indicating a purpose in the government to abandon the fort.

The chivalrous Major Anderson acted no part in the vulgar chicanery of his government. In disgust, he wrote to his commander, General Scott: "My heart is not in this war, which I see is about to be begun."

At the very moment when ships—secretly prepared in New York harbor to replenish Anderson's supplies and reinforce his slender garrison—were on the seas, steering to their destination, Seward, in Washington, assured the Confederate commissioners there that the *status quo* at Sumter would not be changed without notice. "Faith as to Sumter kept; wait and see," was his sinister phrase.

The fleet secretly prepared in New York harbor for Sumter was not limited to supply ships. The war-ship "Powhatan" was of the number, and it was loaded with armed soldiers. By a misunderstanding in Washington, at the last moment before the sailing of the fleet the "Powhatan" was detached and sent on to Pensacola, while the intent of the president and Mr. Wells, the secretary of the navy, was that she should deliver hundreds of soldiers to Major Anderson.¹¹

The Confederate commissioners, Messrs. John Forsyth, of Alabama; Crawford, of Georgia, and Roman, of Louisiana, had spent many weeks in Washington in vain effort

¹¹Morse's Lincoln, I, 247-8.

to make a settlement in the name of their government for all forts, arsenals, public lands or other properties once owned by the United States, now within Confederate jurisdiction. With the opening gun of war they returned. There was no "War of Secession." The flag had been insulted. Mr. Lincoln's remedy for his distracted country had been applied and was found sufficient. The whole north was ablaze with the ardor of revenge. Camps of volunteers filled the land. The drill and the manual of arms occupied half the population. Every manufactory of munition of war responded to the government's call for help. An agent was hurried to Europe to buy arms. The Washington government was rescued from impending dissolution. Senator Douglas rushed to the White House to declare himself for war.

The compass of this narrative does not reach the argument of the legitimacy of birth of the Confederacy, abounding and conclusive. The aspirations of that government, nevertheless, carry to the historian an obligation to examine fairly the foundations thereof, and what was their value, in the essentials of independence; what of its material resources of industry; what the estimate which the civilized world put upon its commerce; what the experience in statecraft possessed by its leaders; what show of valor in wars made by its people. Five millions of singularly homogeneous whites, "Norman and Saxon and Dane are we," the purest bred of all Americans, and four millions of the most civilized of all Africans, faithful servants and true friends, constituted the population. The white population of the southern states was landed autocracy. In the social sense, there was no wage class in all the area. Individuals, state officers, the clergy, commercial clerks, earned annual salaries, but, combined, these were too small a fractional part of the whole to disturb the dominant proprietary character of the inhabitancy. The minority land-holders were masters of slaves and cultivated by slave labor the swamps and heavier soils in large acreage called "plantations." All merchants, lawyers, men of letters and physicians

aspired, by investment of savings, to enter this exotic social life of ease and refinement—the planter's circle. The majority of the whites lived on the health-giving highlands, and with their own brawn tilled the fields surrounding their humble abodes. No purer democracy than the united community composed of these factors was ever known. The autocrat of the plantation, or of the farm, was alike the democrat in the aggregation of white men.

A distinguished citizen of the north recently (1911) addressed an association of individuals engaged in the effort to cultivate the spirit of peace among nations and to prevent resort to war. He enumerated wars in the past that seemed to have been useless to effect the ostensible purpose. Coming, in chronological order, to the war between the United States and the Confederate States, he declared: "When slavery becomes imbedded in a society, it may require the sharp incision of the sword to eradicate the institution."

From the standpoint of an hereditary southern slave master, perfectly familiar with the relation of slavery to the negro and to the white population of all classes, I contend that the institution was self-extinguishing by process of influences inherent, and that the sword was an intruder, the agent of empirical statecraft and absurd sentimentality.

"Let us alone!" was the sole cry of the south. Mr. Lincoln answered: "This republic cannot exist half free, half slave: a house divided against itself must fall." This republic was not built upon Mr. Lincoln's post-structural theory. Mr. Lincoln was not abreast with the moving forces which were potent for the correction of abnormal relations, if any, between the ever-advancing humanity of the southern negro slave and the ever-advancing white man's civilization of the age. He overlooked the native capacity of the negro to incorporate himself in that civilization.

Daniel Webster, late in the 1840's visited Charleston, S. C., for the first time. He came, doubtless, to see with his own eyes something of negro slavery. There he was received with distinguished cordiality. He saw the



"CEDAR GROVE,"—PLANTATION RESIDENCE, 1860, IN THE CANEBRAKE, MADISON COUNTY, ALA.—
THE HOME OF THE AUTHOR.

adjacent plantations and the slaves in the daily routine of their lives. He went thence far into the interior, to Columbia. Plantations of the vicinity were thrown open to his inspection. He left his carriage, walked among the laborers in the fields, talked freely with them and entered their cabins, observing the nurseries and the general habit of plantation life among them. At a formal dinner given in his honor that night, he rose to a post-prandial speech, and among other things said: "I do not see that the present condition of the negro here can be altered for the better."¹²

Lincoln, Webster, nor Calhoun considered the accomplished interdependence of the two occupant races of the south in its ultimate. The lower race had been continuously progressive. It was progress so effective that it was gradually and surely moving the race upward to the status of wage-earners out from the status of servitude.

Many milestones stand forever along the history of the advancing interdependence of the whites and blacks in the south. The Declaration of Independence, George Washington, commerce in cotton, the cotton mill and wage labor are among them. The inexorable law of economy, which would emancipate the chattel to enlarge his sphere of labor, was almost arrived when the sword cut it short.

The negro, whose presence was potential to establish democratic relations between all degrees and conditions of whites, was not a serf, not a vassal, nor tenant, nor hireling. He was not a slave to his master, but to the law. He had, by process, founded on his own merits, become the African of tutelage. From the planter class of slave owners and from the former class of non-slave owners, white men went to the state Legislature and there gave the African of the plantation that security of statute law which he had never reached in Africa, nor had promise of reaching in America, except in the south. The old-age pension, the employer's indemnity law, the foundling hospital of the most enlightened nations, in effect, were legalized features of the southern plantation discipline, and the African was the sole real or prospective beneficiary.

¹²Perry's Sketches of Public Men.

The action of slavery had effected appreciation of the market value of the chattel and this value had risen higher than the economic conditions were capable of sustaining. In 1860 a negro slave thirty years of age would sell for \$1,500. At forty years the same individual would bring less, at fifty years still less would be paid, while at sixty he would become practically unmarketable. The average proceeds of the labor of the man at thirty years of age did not exceed \$200 net. The expense of maintenance, cost of insurance, certainty of irreparable decay—all were active factors militating against the value of the property. The south was abounding in mineral resources, water power for manufacturing, building of railroads, etc., wherein wage labor must force itself and where slave labor, at the prevailing cost of the slaves on the market, could not enter.

The cannibalistic wild African had, in a century, upon his own merits, worked himself up from the status of slave to the status of servitude. Having thus far advanced, the way was open to him—the way to the status of free wage-earner.

The sword came in, not to advance the capacity of the negro to assimilate with the white man's cultivation, but to revolutionize the process by which the negro had approached the wage status, secure in ultimate achievement, and thus to throw him back upon his own native incompetency for self-support.

In 1860 there was a recognized margin between the attainment of the negro and white race; in 1911 that margin is infinitely wider. In 1860 the negro domestic servant moulded the tallow candles that lighted his master's mansion; in 1911 the mansion of the white man is lighted by an incandescent globe which knows no part of negro talent or skill in the manufacture. In 1860 the grain cradle, propelled by the brawn of the negro, cut the harvest and the negro binders followed behind; in 1911 the self-binding harvester is indebted to no aid from the negro in its manufacture or use. In a word, the genius of the white man feeds upon its own, while the field thus opened to succeed-

ing generations is inaccessible to the black man's capacity.

There was abundant room and abounding hope for the negro in the self-regulated ways and means of southern society. The southern life was threatened. Planters and farmers alike ardently rose to the rescue. Since the history of man, no community-life had foundation the same as this. Here, unmindful of the threatening from without, lived in harmonious interdependence and in the enjoyment of phenomenal prosperity, two of God's creatures—the superior and the inferior race. If the two were intended for other contact, what? The world had no experience exactly like this; the theories of humanitarianism were at sea here. Nowhere, and in no era save this, had the African negro become a useful part of a virile and splendid civilization. The negro was an end in himself. Political efficiency had reached here its ultimate in liberty and equality, without Bedlam. In this racial contact alone the states of the Union supporting it had not outgrown the charter of American principles of government. From phenomenal interdependence of the occupant races southern industry was able to contribute to the world's commerce its richest item—richest since the mines of Peru and Mexico. There was nothing to compare to the influence of southern cotton upon the commerce of the civilized world.

Robert Walker, a native of Pennsylvania, secretary of the treasury under Polk in 1846, had prepared a tariff for revenue only, a short, simple tax law. Calhoun had extinguished, absolutely, the American system whereby raw cotton here was taxed to pay a bonus to cotton mills there. Congress wrote the Walker tariff into the page left vacant by the extinction of the American system. The great south took heart. On every side abounding prosperity sprang up. It becomes us here to take note of it.

The ratio of increase in cotton plantation products, from 1850 to 1860, far exceeded that of the cotton mills, nearly all of the latter three thousand miles from the fields.

We shall examine the evidence offered by the seaports here and there. For two years, 1859-1860, the last two of

full reports under the southern conditions, we find the following comparisons of business, in the determinate item of domestic exports:

New Orleans, \$208,276,608—New York, \$123,127,769.

Mobile, \$72,000,000—Boston, \$21,271,440.

Charleston, \$39,081,544—Philadelphia, \$10,480,919.¹³

Irresponsible disputation holds that this enormous export trade kept the southern plantations out of repair and under slovenly administration. It may or may not be against the blacksmith to say his shop is not as tidy as the silversmith's. Southern plantations were worn out and abandoned; New England farms were more frequently worn out and abandoned. A plantation cultivated by negro slave labor, devoted to the production of the monopoly crop, cotton, was liable to abuse peculiar to the conditions, and the abuse was often excessive. We are charged with the task of setting forth, however insufficiently, the fundamental resources of the states that comprised the Confederacy, to the end that facts, attaching themselves to the allied factors, southern statecraft and the performances of Confederate citizen soldiery, may the better be understood.

We have said the ratio of increase of southern prosperity in the decade 1850-1860, as compared with that just preceding, 1840-1850, was higher in the south than in the north, that the rule was of general application and that the result was due to reform in the federal taxes. Pursuing the contention, railroad mileage increased in the six New England states in the ten years immediately preceding the birth of the Confederacy by 1,162 miles; in the four southern states, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina and Georgia, all touching the Atlantic, railroad mileage in the same period increased by 3,354 miles. This comparison is fair.

Recurring to the allegation that the flourishing southern export trade wrought impoverishment of the masses and decadence of home capital, it is shown that, in the matter of liberal diet, the charge is without proof. The per capita value of meats consumed in the slave states in 1859 was

¹³Statistical Abstract U. S. Treasury, 1886.

\$8.83; in the free states \$5.33. The slave states in 1859 produced 437,045,726 bushels of corn and consumed the crop; the free states produced 384,045,725 and marketed in the south much of the crop. The items of diet, rice and sugar, raised in the United States only in the south, were largely consumed here. In the decade before the birth of the Confederacy, there is additional evidence of the greater relative prosperity of the south over the north which cannot be ignored in any attempt to account for the character of the Confederate citizen soldiery.

An honest inquirer might take into his estimate the cash value of agricultural lands, north and south, in that census period immediately before the Walker or revenue tariff—1840-1850. In order to understand the southern political attitude, he would compare the result with the cash value of the same lands under that tariff or tax of 1850-1860. The study fairly prosecuted, we shall have arrived at the most infallible test of the industrial life made ready for the Confederacy.

1850: Cash value of agricultural lands in Virginia, South Carolina and Georgia, \$394,586,672.

1860: These same lands of slave states had risen in value to \$668,427,522, approximately one hundred per cent.

We take up the ratio of increase in value of the same class of property, in the same class of states in the north.

1850: Cash value of agricultural lands in New York, New Jersey and Pennsylvania, \$1,082,660,252.

1860: These same lands in the free states had risen in value only to \$1,645,664,638, less than seventy per cent.

Pursuing the vital fact into the class of admitted states, agricultural land in Alabama, Mississippi, Arkansas and Texas, slave states, rose in value from \$150,878,113 in 1850, to \$536,688,174, or more than threefold, in 1860, while in four admitted free states in the same period, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois and Iowa, the increased value was from \$600,934,533 to \$1,652,449,421, less than threefold.

The expenditures of the southern states on colleges, academies and schools in 1860 was far greater, per capita

of white population, than those of the northern states. While large sums went with southern youths to be expended in patronage of northern schools of various kinds, none came to the south through the same channels. True as it may be that general diffusion of education prevailed more in the north, the standard of the colleges of the south was not lower than those of the north.

Unfortunately, perhaps, the southern people at the outset of their movement for independence, too sanguine of the right of their cause and the justice of its maintenance to expect exhaustive war, and without sufficient reliance upon their already fixed and adequate state governments, set up an elective federal government, at once made impracticable by the muster of the electors into military camps, disfranchised, practically.

The Confederacy at the outset became the army and the army needed a simpler administration than political machinery. It needed a commissary general, a system of replenishment of ranks, a head without political debts or obligations to localities or interests. It needed the impartial, systematic and vigorous use of the resources of the land—that, and that only.

Friends of Calhoun remembered that when, ten years or more before, he saw his end approaching, he had suggested the young senator from Mississippi, Jefferson Davis, as a statesman well fitted to assume the leadership where he himself left off in the great crisis.

Innumerable hosts of Persians were moving in battle array upon Athens. Aristides and Themistocles governed there, and upon them devolved the mighty task of preparation for the defense. Aristides was a just man, earnest in his resort to precedents and traditions. Themistocles was of quick discernment, a good judge of the right man for the place, ready always to apply the means to the end. The Athenians disposed of Aristides; Themistocles saw the invaders of his country flee before him.

Two Kentucky-born presidents carried their respective attributes of character into the great conflict of the Amer-

ican sections. Both were great men. Mr. Davis was a welcome great man. With his advent the people shouted with joy, "The hour and the man have met." The day the choice fell upon him the universal belief was that half the risk of the movement was thus cancelled. Mr. Lincoln was universally doubted in the north and was accepted simply as an experiment that must, under the conditions, be given a trial.

The president of the Confederacy was a typical southerner—a cotton planter of the great cotton producing valley, a most polished gentleman of the parlor, an eloquent political declaimer, a senator of the first rank. He had fought in some of the country's greatest battles and bore the scars of the field.

Events matured. The Confederate president, shackled, guarded as a felon, fed as an outcast, was called to the vicarious endurance of the degradation of his country and his cause. In the strength of his martyrdom his memory survives, so that down to this day no name among his fellows conjures as his.

We have a simple, straightforward story from Mrs. Davis of the first impression made upon her mind by the remarkable gentleman who soon afterwards became her husband, she seventeen years of age, he thirty-five. The associations of the plantation home, where both were guests, failed to reveal his character. Was he young or was he old? None could mistake the habit of this idiosyncrasy, however,—when he spoke, all who heard were supposed by him to accept his utterance as final.¹⁴

Among the details of his office work, in the early weeks at Montgomery, the president summoned to him Captain Caleb Huse, a native of Massachusetts, detailed from the army of the United States the year before to act as drill-master and commandant of cadets at the University of Alabama. The president, opposite Huse at his desk, excused himself to examine his mail. One long letter he read with painful suspense. Casting the sheets away,

¹⁴Mrs. Davis' Memoirs.

he muttered audibly: "I wish my friends would cease to advise me."¹⁵

While the civil government, in jealousy of its creators, the army, made the elective president commander-in-chief of the forces of war on land and sea, it was provided that he should supply himself with a cabinet of official advisers, among them a secretary of war, to assist in the direction of the sword, and a secretary of the treasury, to assist in the control of the purse. These officers were responsible functionaries of the system, not automatons of the commander-in-chief.

The government had its genesis in protracted and earnest controversy between southern secessionists and southern Unionists and represented, in the fact of its organization, the triumph of the former faction over the latter.

At an early day the statesmen from whose brains and hearts the Confederacy had sprung, cried in lament: "The government has no energy!"¹⁶

Secretary of State Toombs wrote in June of the first year to his friend, Vice-president Stephens: "Mr. Davis is moving slowly, too slowly, I fear, for the crisis."

The cabinet advisers selected by the southern president for the most responsible positions had first to learn the importance and necessity of the government itself, and next to learn the weight of their offices under it. They soon and easily learned to know the unconquerable aversion of their chief to the opinions of other men.

The president himself had been long known as a secessionist. His faith was tried and firm. He was well aware that nothing could exempt him from an active part in southern political events when, in his farewell speech to the United States Senate, he said, referring to the recent secession of his state: "I therefore say I concur in the action of the people of Mississippi, believing it to be

¹⁵Huse's Pamphlet.

¹⁶Letters of Thomas R. R. Cobb, a deputy from Georgia to Congress, to his wife; Letters of the editor of the Charleston (S. C.) *Mercury*; Conversations of John A. Winston, political leader of Alabama, and many other citizens.

necessary and proper, and should have been bound by their action if my belief had been otherwise."¹⁷

The president-elect passed through several states en route to the capital to assume his office. The most enthusiastic demonstrations of public confidence awaited him at every stopping-place. Abundant evidence remains to this day that he came with remediation to summon to his aid in the discharge of his duties great men who had been his associates in the cultivation of the principles upon which the new government was founded. His first official act was to offer to William L. Yancey choice of the presidential appointments.

He selected C. C. Clay, Jr., a United States senator from Alabama, for secretary of war, and Robert Toombs, a senator from Georgia, for secretary of the treasury—the two vital offices in his Cabinet. He selected Toombs because his "knowledge of finance had particularly attracted [his] my notice when we served together in the United States Senate."¹⁸

The office of secretary of the treasury—in whose vaults there was not a dollar—the office upon the administration of which the wealth of the richest people on the earth depended for security, was not given, however, to the secessionist whose "knowledge of finance" was thoroughly well known to the president and to the country, but to Mr. Memminger, a distinguished lawyer of South Carolina, of foreign birth, who was without reputation of any kind beyond the narrow limits of his even-going, well-regulated state, but who had been for many years the ablest of the leaders of the small Union anti-secession element there. Mr. Memminger had not by inheritance of birth the southern instinct. His early and constant sympathy with the Washington government was normal. The Confederate government never developed a financial policy. No country ever had a better or safer foundation for one, but Mr. Memminger never understood the conditions about him.

¹⁷Cong. *Globe*, Jan. 22, 1861; *The South in the Building of the Nation*, IX, 414.

¹⁸*Rise and Fall of the Confederate Government*, I, 242.

At an early meeting of the cabinet, a member let fall the suggestion that preparations for war with the United States need not be exhaustive, because, if the then existing status of peace between the two neighboring countries should be broken, the southern people were the fighters and would speedily terminate the conflict. The president spoke tersely in correction; such a war, he said, would last thirty years and none present would live to see the close.¹⁹

"Cotton is king." Mr. Memminger, a lifelong Unionist, without hereditary instinct, without political science to instruct him in the premises, failed to apprehend the maxim. There has been for a century but one rival to cotton in the potentialities of commerce, and that is gold. Every day in the year these two are convertible terms in the chambers of commerce.

They were great men who had no voice in the government they founded, and we shall tell somewhat of the use they proposed, but in vain, to make of Confederate resources of war and independence.

A considerable quantity of cotton was yet in Confederate ports from the crop of 1860 when the government was organized, February 4th, 1861. A full crop was planted in 1861, before the war opened, and was harvested, unmolested by armies, a yield of 3,000,000 bales. Statesmen from whose brains and hearts the government sprang made substantially this proposition to it: That the public treasury should take all the cotton (condemn it, if necessary), giving interest-bearing bonds for it. Two million bales at ten cents would cost the government \$100,000,000. The rapidly augmenting value of the cotton, held, and not marketed in Europe, would have paid the bonds and left enough gold to build at least twenty war-ships. So large a contract for ship-building in the first year of the war would have prevented the interference of the foreign government in whose waters the contractors labored. The vessels would have opened at least one port, and would have been able to convoy the laden ships to and fro. The scheme was unfolded to this author *viva voce* by one of

¹⁹Reagan's Memoirs.

the projectors, the vice-president, in the wartime, with his familiar eloquence declaring: "We should then have had the best currency the world ever saw."

The president was appealed to. The blockade was of no efficiency. The United States had no credit in Europe. Nineteen-twentieths of the exports from the United States in 1859-60 came from the states that comprised the Confederacy—cotton, tobacco, rice, tar, pitch, turpentine and brown sugar. In the free states, fish, coal and ice. The scheme, with cotton as the foundation, was to establish a basis of currency in Europe as sound as gold. So much for the financial side. The political feature was to establish thus a contrast between the commercial value of the Confederacy, to western Europe, and that of the United States. Moreover, a reasonably acute diplomacy, founded on half a billion credit with the Bank of England, and the Bank of France, might have been expected to work wonders in Wall Street political sympathies. The national banking system of the United States, created as an essential government support in time of war, could not have rivalled Confederate credit on Lombard Street and the Bourse of Paris.

From the very first, the founders of the Confederacy urged, with unrelaxing earnestness, the use of cotton by the government. Secretary Memminger failed to respond. He bought large quantities of cotton, in bales, and directed that the planters should hold it, under plantation sheds, subject to government call. He did not see the advantage of the plan proposed by Toombs, Clay, Rhett, Yancey, Wigfall and the secessionists, really blind because, perhaps, he had never assented to their politics.²⁰

Three years later the president lay in shackles in a case-mate, an immortal, vicarious martyr. The Confederacy had fallen. In familiar conversation with an official visitor, he said the plan of shipping the cotton "would have given a

²⁰In a letter to Mr. Stephens, of explanatory character, dated Sept. 17th, 1867, Mr. Memminger said: "As for the notion since promulgated of shipping cotton to England early in the war and holding it there as the basis of credit, that is completely negatived, as you know, by the fact that at the early stage of the war no one expected the blockade or the war to last more than a year." Quoted in Avary's Recollections of Stephens.

cash basis in Europe of a thousand million of dollars in gold, and all securities drawn against this balance in bank would have maintained par value. Such a sum would have more than sufficed all the needs of the Confederacy during the war." But, alas, the manifest thing to do, the inexorable emergency to be met and mastered, was "new"; none could "foresee events"; the president "had not time to study the matter."²¹

Secretary Memminger, in a word, was not prepared by training or by instinct to fill his office. The army depended for life upon the purse. The purse of the richest nation of the family of nations was misplaced and never recovered.

In the spring of 1862, while General McClellan, with the main army of invasion, lay within an hour's march of Richmond, Senator Yancey moved Congress to market \$75,000,000 of government securities in London. After much resistance on the floor a bill was passed to offer the securities, reduced, however, to \$15,000,000.

The securities offered to the last-named amount were twenty-year seven per cent. government bonds, at ninety cents, payable, at the option of the holder, in gold or in cotton, New Orleans middling, at six pence, say twelve and one-half cents, six months after the "ratification of peace between the United States and the Confederate States."

Nevertheless, if the state of war between the belligerents designated should be prolonged beyond the date of maturity of the bonds, and the holder should prefer cotton payment, then the Confederate government would deliver the cotton at discretion to any railroad terminus, or on any navigable stream with seaport connections.²²

The bids were opened on the \$15,000,000 offer in London. The aggregate amount bid was \$75,000,000 and the premium was five per cent.

This transaction proved the contention of Yancey, Robert Toombs, Vice-President Stephens and the secession states-

²¹Dr. Craven's *Prison Life of Jefferson Davis*, 176.

²²Rise and Fall of the Confederate Government.

men generally, that a credit might be established in London, in favor of the Confederate government, upon which a Confederate currency for domestic use might exist superior in value to the paper medium of the United States, for there was never a day when the United States marketed its bonds, in the war time, in London.

The secretary of war of longest tenure and holding that position of responsibility through the most serious military operations, was an eminent lawyer of Richmond, James A. Seddon, who had had no military training whatever.

Mr. Seddon was a leader of the Whig, or Union, political sentiment in Virginia. He was a member of the secession convention of Virginia and was bitterly opposed to the formation of the Confederacy. In fact, after the Confederate government was in full operation he continued to urge the "Peace Congress," sitting at Washington, to adopt resolutions calculated to dissolve that young government. Later, Mr. Seddon resisted the preliminary steps taken by Virginia to join the Confederacy.

Secretary Seddon was an able and an honest man, but his life-long sentiments were unfavorable to dissolution of the Union. The Confederacy never engaged in a policy of war approved by the Johnstons, Lee, Beauregard, Bragg, Hood, Forrest, and the more intelligent soldiers generally.

John A. Campbell, a great lawyer, had been elevated to the Supreme Court of the United States from the bar of Alabama. He was one of the majority of the court which pronounced the Dred Scott decree. After the reduction of Fort Sumter, and after the call of Mr. Lincoln for troops to suppress the Confederacy, Campbell found his office untenable. He came south for refuge, disavowing, however, all sympathy with the new government and forswearing all purpose to participate in it. "When I returned to Alabama, in May, 1861, it was to receive coldness, aversion or contumely from the secession population."²³

The senator from Mississippi, Mr. Davis, and this as-

²³Campbell's letter to Curtis. Century Mag., Sept., 1889.

sociate of the court were intimate in Washington. The president promptly embraced the refugee, inviting him to a seat among his legally constituted cabinet of advisers, whose province was to direct the people in their death struggle. This tender of authority refused, an appointment to go over the sea was urged upon him, but was also declined. Campbell finally consented to become assistant secretary of war, not to promote war, however. "When I entered the office," he says, "I supposed I might become useful in the settlement of peace, if I were connected with the government."²⁴

The assistant secretary of war, a man of towering intellect, continued to cherish his original purpose, which was to effect a "peace" which would result in the dissolution of the Confederacy! The friends and enemies of the administration wanted peace, says Campbell, but none believed the president was of that way of thinking. None wanted it except by negotiation for recognition of the Confederacy, save Campbell. He had been neither friend nor patron of the government in whose service he had entered, to the end that, by convenient means, he might assist in its defeat. So much for the War Department, as a means of support to the commander-in-chief of the army.

Judah P. Benjamin, a lawyer of New Orleans, had succeeded Leroy Pope Walker, a lawyer of Alabama and first secretary of war. Walker, after Yancey, was the leader of the secession movement in Alabama, and, imbued with the views of his faction touching the unsatisfactory conduct of the war, he resigned in August, after four months' tenure, to take the field as brigadier general. Benjamin was an alien like Memminger. He was hardly second in ability to any lawyer in the United States. The army complained greatly of his incompetence in the War Office. Albert Sidney Johnston, J. E. Johnston, Bragg, T. J. (Stonewall) Jackson were among the victims of his "unhandsome excrescences." The action of Congress upon Benjamin's administration prevailed with him to resign the War Office. George W. Randolph, Benjamin's successor, formerly in

²⁴Campbell's letter to Curtis. *Century Mag.*, Sept., 1889.

the "old" navy, soon resigned, as Walker had done, because of difference of opinion in vital questions. Benjamin was immediately promoted, as rank in the cabinet was supposed to stand, to be secretary of state. His office was hard by that of the president. From that time forward he and Benjamin H. Hill, a senator from Georgia, undoubtedly divided whatever influence other men were permitted to bring to bear upon the president.

Hill possessed very respectable talent and a remarkable gift of oratory. He entered active life as a lawyer, at *nisi prius* courts in Georgia, and adopted the Whig or Union politics. This was in 1850. Georgia was as enthusiastic for the Union then as South Carolina was lukewarm. Toombs, Stephens and Hill were accepted as dominating the Georgia field of political oratory, and all then were Whigs. At this time so preponderating was the Whig element in the state that out of one hundred and sixty students of the State University, it was found one hundred and thirty were sons of Whigs, large planters.

Toombs joined the state-rights party after 1852. In 1860 he supported Breckinridge and carried the state. Stephens supported Douglas, but Hill held fast to Bell and the Union to the last. The wealthy slave masters left Hill and the Whig party to go with Toombs. The result was complete political disaster to Hill. He was never an abolitionist, as the phrase then signified, but the planters, in changing sides, where change was impossible for him with rivals such as Toombs, Stephens and Herschell Johnson in the field, left him in the lurch. He never forgave them. His opinions on slavery were as near an approach to emancipation as circumstances made possible.

Nevertheless, the eloquent orator retained a considerable following. He was sent to the secession convention of Georgia as an avowed opponent of secession. He made the last speech delivered in that body, in opposition to the ordinance of secession. That was in January. In the early days of February following he took his seat as deputy in the provisional Congress of the Confederate States. He

accepted this seat with mental reservations, prepared to welcome a possible early dissolution of the Confederacy.²⁵

Mr. Hill, in his defeat in Georgia, cried to his people: "Knowing human nature as I do, I declare to you no government as great and beneficent as this Union can be overthrown without bloodshed. It will take a hundred years to restore to the south the advantages she already possesses."

Mr. Hill was answered. The north elected Lincoln by stratagem; the purpose in Lincoln's election was revolution. "It was not the passage of the 'personal liberty' laws, it was not the circulation of incendiary literature, it was not the raid of John Brown, it was not the operation of unjust and unequal tariff laws, but it was the systematic and persistent struggle to deprive the southern states of equality in the Union" that forced the genesis of the Confederacy.

On a day of early legislation of the provisional Congress, prior to the arrival of the president upon the scene, Robert Barnwell Rhett, of South Carolina, chairman, reported from the Committee on Foreign Relations a bill to establish intercourse between the Confederacy and England and France through Confederate seaports.

The bill was founded on the decisive principle of the American Revolution, a treaty with France and Spain, in that case, providing for reciprocity of advantages between the United States and those powers. Rhett's bill offered to England and France exclusive foreign commerce through all Confederate seaports for a period of twenty years, the tariff on imports not to exceed twenty per cent. *ad valorem*, and the port charges to be regulated by the necessary expenses of the harbor. The consideration to the Confederacy was recognition. Congress required the president to appoint a commission of three citizens to proceed to Europe to negotiate for the recognition of the Confederacy. But Rhett's bill failed of passage. On application, the president failed to instruct the commission on the line of the bill. Congress was ready to pass the Rhett bill, amended

²⁵Life, Letters and Speeches of B. H. Hill, by his son.

to read "six" instead of "twenty" years, and thereupon the mover withdrew it, as the amendment seemed inadequate to the diplomatic scheme. The three commissioners, W. L. Yancey, P. B. Rost and A. Dudley Mann, sailed from the port of Charleston in March, 1861. The next year they were followed by John M. Mason and John Slidell. No instructions tantamount to the Rhett bill were ever given.²⁶ The Rhett bill followed the example of the United States in its treaty of 1778 with France and Spain, pledging an offensive and defensive alliance between the treaty-making powers. The Confederate commissioners, however, were instructed to obtain recognition of the Confederacy merely on the merits of the case.²⁷ Rhett thought inducement to be imperative to effect the end. Benjamin Cudworth Yancey, United States minister to the Argentine Republic, had just returned to the south, having paused in London, en route, to investigate official opinion there. He also considered an inducement in the premises essential. Rhett's bill was drawn, offering practical free trade with the Confederate ports as an offset to the high tariff party platform on which Lincoln had been elected—which platform committed his administration, and the government under it, to restoration of the American system, the high protective tariff, inimical to England, her manufactures and carrying trade. The Confederacy having no merchant marine, England must do the carrying trade.

It was well known to both American belligerents that England and France—that is, the English ministry and the Emperor, Napoleon III.—expected the Confederacy to carry off the honors of war. Both awaited this result, diplomatically neutral. The martial attributes of character in the two peoples were considered and the prophecy followed, favorable to the southerners.

As between the merits of the radical democracy of the nullifying states, led by Abraham Lincoln, and the aristocratic democracy of the seceding states, led by Jefferson

²⁶Rise and Fall of the Confederate Government.

²⁷Ibid.

Davis, the government circles of western Europe logically leaned toward the latter.

The ship "Oreto," in the earlier time of the war, sailed out from Liverpool to engage in the "Sicilian fruit trade," but, once at sea, became the active Confederate cruiser "Florida." The renowned "Alabama" was built on the Mersey, on Confederate account. Spies of Charles Francis Adams, United States minister to the court of St. James, discovered on the Clyde two other vessels about to sail on account of the Confederate government. With this information, and deeply incensed, Mr. Adams called at the office of her majesty's secretary of foreign affairs, Lord John Russell. The American demanded that instant steps be taken to prevent the egress to sea of the two new ships. Lord John declined to interfere. Thereupon Mr. Adams, rising to take his departure, turned and spoke sharply: "Your lordship understands this means war." The next morning the United States minister received an invitation to call at the Office of Foreign Affairs. Lord John there explained that the government had considered the matter and that, if the minister would deposit in the Bank of England five hundred thousand dollars in gold indemnity, within forty-eight hours, to secure the government against adverse judgment of the Admiralty Court, the order to arrest the sailing of the vessels would be issued. The British secretary had no reason to believe his terms could be accepted. There was no cable. The government of the United States had no credit in the Bank of England. Adams had no fortune of his own available. George Peabody heard of the matter and voluntarily deposited the gold.²⁸

News of the contretemps reached Confederate Commissioner Slidell in Paris. He mentioned it to the sympathetic Emperor Napoleon III. "Why don't you build your ships here?" he asked. A cruiser thereupon was contracted for by the Confederate agent on the ground and made ready in French waters. The United States minister in France, Dayton, protested to the Emperor. The Emperor sent for

²⁸Congressional Record, vol. XXXI, p. 5254.

the contractor and promised to have him shot if he failed to sell the ship to another purchaser.²⁹

At an early period of the war a member of Parliament offered a resolution that the government should recognize the Confederacy, but at the suggestion of the prime minister, Lord Palmerston, he consented to await the government's initiative.

When Caleb Huse, the purchasing agent, reached London in 1861, without funds, a gentleman of London, hearing of his predicament, advanced to him half a million dollars in gold to enable him to close contracts for arms for the Confederacy.

The London *Times*, the organ of the controlling class of England, sent Russell, a distinguished correspondent, to study American conditions. The correspondent saw McDowell's rout at Manassas, observed its effect on the politicians in Washington and the merchants in New York, and drew pictures of events so vivid and so favorable to the Confederates, that his correspondence, published in that great vehicle of news, had the effect of keeping all Europe on tiptoe for news of future battles with like results. This sympathy never entirely died away, but until after the battle of Gettysburg, it was so active that it would have required only obedience to General Lee's orders by subordinates on that field to have given it decisive expression by act of the British government.

A decisive difference between the revolutionary energy of the two commanders-in-chief of the belligerents was discovered at the outset. At an early cabinet meeting at Montgomery, the postmaster general, Reagan, advanced the theory that a competent commander and sufficient force should be sent to occupy Louisville, Kentucky, with the double motive of recruiting the army and obstructing the approach of invasion. His suggestion was coldly received. As to occupying Kentucky soil by an armed force, the Confederacy, founded in vindication of states rights, must not be guilty of the inconsistency.³⁰

²⁹Reagan's Reminiscences.

³⁰Reagan's Memoirs.

The Legislature of Kentucky had decided upon a status of neutrality. Governor Magoffin sent General S. B. Buckner, commander of the Kentucky militia, to General George B. McClellan, commander of United States troops, to negotiate for the observance of that pledge of neutrality by the United States, and the agreement had been signed by both parties. Governor Magoffin, to make assurance doubly sure, had ordered General Buckner to assemble state troops at Columbus, to expel any violators of the neutrality agreement. Thus the matter ended with the Confederate government standing on the high plane of theory and dignity.

Mr. Lincoln, however, first sought to dispose of the plea of neutrality by appointing certain Kentuckians of influence to high office in the United States. A footing in the state thus secured, it became necessary to defend the government at Washington by occupying Kentucky with a great army, as an integer of the Union. Seeing this action, Buckner resigned and joined the Confederacy.

The mounted arm of the Confederate service represented with historic emphasis the peculiar military capacity of the southern people. The unsupported operations of the Confederate mounted men, from first to last of the great war, reversed great moving columns of the enemy, brought his most mature campaigns to nought, and so efficiently guarded the main body, to which they were attached, as to relieve it in large degree of the peril of comparatively inferior weapons and lesser numbers.

On the other hand, the unsupported operations of the same arm of the invader have no distinct history of achievement. The cavalry of the United States, assisted by infantry or not, failed throughout the whole war to alter the course of any campaign initiated by a Confederate commander.

This fact is important enough to the science of war to justify recital of evidences in detail. Some of these evidences, snatched at random, will be mentioned. At the outset General Johnston was able to deceive and paralyze the greater army of Patterson, about Harper's Ferry, and march unmolested nearly a hundred miles to rescue Beaure-

gard, at Manassas, from impending defeat; and this memorable feat was made possible by the conduct of Colonel J. E. B. Stuart, with a regiment or two of raw, half-armed cavalry, equipped with farm saddles and bridles.

That was in 1861. The next year, Colonel Joseph Wheeler, with about 3000 cavalry, was charged with the duty of covering Bragg's retreat from Kentucky. Bragg retreated from the western part of Kentucky, on two nearly parallel roads, to Tennessee. Wheeler must protect the rear of each marching column from 3000 cavalry and an infantry force larger than the Confederate columns combined. He soon so punished the hostile cavalry as to send it back to the rear of the infantry, and so delayed and defeated the advanced columns of infantry as to put Bragg through the retreat in safety, with all his trains. That was in October, 1862.

In December of the same year General Grant started two columns from Memphis, one, under Sherman, to clear the Mississippi Valley down to New Orleans, and the other, under himself, to sweep the interior of Mississippi and Alabama and capture Mobile from the land side; thence on to Atlanta, and all would be over with the Confederacy. To support his army until he could reach the plantation region of Mississippi and the canebrake of Alabama, he placed a million dollars' worth of stores at Holly Springs, to be distributed along his march by the railroads. General Earl Van Dorn, with some 3500 cavalry, worked his way through Grant's lines, drove the heavy guard off at Holly Springs, burned the entire stores and so compelled Grant to abandon his splendidly conceived campaign and return to Memphis.

When General Hooker, after Chancellorsville, suspected General Lee of a movement to cross the Potomac for Pennsylvania, finding Stuart's cavalry like a veil hanging between the two hostile armies, he despatched General Pleasanton, with more than 10,000 of the most superbly equipped and mounted cavalry ever seen in America, to unlock Lee's secret. Along with the cavalry he sent Ames' brigade of infantry. On June 9th Stuart threw himself upon the head of this impertinent column, at Beverly's ford,

and hurled it back in utter disaster. Stuart's force was 6000 strong, without infantry support. Lee continued, undisturbed, on his way across the river.

The next month after this event, General John H. Morgan, in order to prevent a large force of the enemy in Kentucky and Ohio from passing through east Tennessee to Chattanooga, thus enveloping Bragg in middle Tennessee, facing Rosecrans, against orders, carried 2000 cavalry into Ohio. Morgan's expedition, unluckily, resulted in his capture and the dispersing of his men, but it also arrested the march of the enemy into east Tennessee and gave Bragg time to fight at Chickamauga.

In February, 1864, General Grant again planned a campaign to march upon Mobile through Meridian and Selma. After much discussion between Sherman and himself as to the selection of a commander of the cavalry of the expedition, as that arm must be depended on to feed the whole and lay waste the land, choice fell upon General Sooy Smith. Sherman, with 20,000 men, started from Vicksburg February 1st and soon drove Polk's 15,000 men across the Bigbee to Demopolis. Sooy Smith left Memphis with 7000 picked cavalry, heavy infantry support and twenty pieces of field artillery to join the main army at Meridian. Forrest struck this magnificent force at Okolona, Miss., with less than half its numbers and drove it, pell-mell, back to Memphis. Sherman, with his 20,000 men, marched to Meridian and back whence he had come.

In June, 1864, General Grant had invested Petersburg, on his way to Richmond. Finding that Lee received all his supplies from the south of his lines, Grant dispatched Sheridan, with a splendid cavalry and artillery force, to strike Lynchburg, lying on the railroad. Sheridan was expected to be joined at Lynchburg by Hunter's army from the Valley of Virginia. In May Stuart had fallen in combat at Yellow Tavern. Wade Hampton was in his place. Hampton struck Sheridan on the march at Trevilian station. Sheridan's expedition was there and then brought to a close. Two days afterward Sheridan reported to Grant: "I regret my inability to carry out your instructions."

Colonel John S. Mosby, with a few hundred mounted men, performed feats so wonderful that mere mention of him stands out an irresistible argument. He completes the list of great cavalry commanders, single examples of whose prowess has been given.

The inappreciative government never permitted the mounted service to exceed one-fifth in number of the army. The mounted arm was employed to guard the infantry in camp or on the march, except in the isolated examples of Morgan and Forrest. The records of Morgan and Forrest and of Joseph Wheeler, when permitted to make a record, attest the fatal error of the government. The Johnstons, Lee, Hardee, Hood, Dabney Maury, Kirby Smith were educated leaders of cavalry. What would have been the result of the conflict if these had been sent, with mounted legions, into the enemy's country! The immortal Lee exclaimed, at the zenith of his fame: "O that I could command a brigade of cavalry!"

The southern soldier was by nature a cavalryman. In the War of the Revolution the only cavalry commanders who made permanent reputation were southern men—Light Horse Harry Lee, Francis Marion, Thomas Sumter, Andrew Pickens. The decisive battle of King's Mountain was won by horsemen, who dismounted at the foot to fight.

Sherman wrote to Halleck the result of his experience: "The young bloods of the south, sons of planters, the lawyers about town, good billiard players and sportsmen, men who never did work and never will—war suits them, and the rascals are brave, fine riders and dangerous subjects in every sense. They are the best cavalry in the world."

March 3d, 1863, General Bragg, commanding the Army of Tennessee, issued the following: "Hereafter no recruit or conscript will be allowed to attach himself to a cavalry command."

January 1st, 1861, there were 1108 commissioned officers in the army of the United States; of these, 284 resigned to enter the army of the Confederate states. One hundred

and eighty-six of those who joined the Confederacy were graduated from West Point.

Perhaps the military education and subsequent practice in the "old " army of General Josiah Gorgas, chief of the Ordnance Department, more sensibly affected the fortunes of the Confederacy than that of any other officer.

Twenty-five of the general officers of the Confederate army were of northern birth. They were: Adjutant General Samuel Cooper, Samuel G. French, Julius A. DeLargnel, all of New Jersey; Josiah Gorgas, J. C. Pember-ton, William McComb, J. K. Duncan, all of Pennsylvania; R. S. Ripley, Charles Clark, Bushrod R. Johnson, Otho French Strahl, D. H. Reynolds, all of Ohio; Frank Gardner, M. L. Smith, Archibald Gracie, D. M. Frost, W. H. Stevens, all of New York; Hoffman Stevens, of Connecticut; Daniel Leadbetter, of Maine; Daniel Ruggles, A. G. Blanchard, Albert Pike, E. A. Perry, all of Massachusetts; J. L. Alcorn, of Illinois, and F. A. Shoup, of Indiana.

The organization of the Confederate army upon the same general plan of that of the United States was widened in important particulars, upon the suggestions of the president and the accomplished soldier, Adjutant General Samuel Cooper.³¹

³¹It is not forgotten that on the field of Gettysburg the cavalry of the United States was active, but the Confederate army was not seriously molested by it. Sheridan, with cavalry, interfered in the last hours of the Army of Northern Virginia, but did not effect conclusive results without infantry support.

CHAPTER I

1836-1861

BIRTH, LINEAGE, EDUCATION

General and Mrs. Joseph Wheeler, in their mature years, prepared with patience and diligence a genealogical record of their respective forefathers, going back through the centuries. Passing it formally to their several children, sons and daughters, they affixed to the completed volume these tender lines: "We have gathered the foregoing, hoping that it may be not only of interest but profitable to you. At least, it will be a constant reminder that every act of yours will in a measure attach to all your name and race."

Joseph Wheeler was born at Augusta, Georgia, September 10, 1836, the youngest of four children, two sons and two daughters. His name in early life was published with "H," for Hull, in the middle, but the letter was soon dropped.

Moses Wheeler, of Kent, England, and Richard Hull, friends and neighbors in that country, both in prime of young manhood, came among the early colonists of Massachusetts. They had the happiness, from time to time, of welcoming kinsmen from the mother country, who settled at Roxbury, Newton, Boston; others passed on to Wallingford, Derby, Fairfield, Stratford, in Connecticut. The lineage of the Massachusetts colonist, Richard Hull, traces to Gaultier de Hoo, of Suffolk, illustrious for great possessions and high authority in England even before Magna Charta. The mother of Anne Boleyn was descended from him, and Julia Knox Hull, mother of General Wheeler, was also descended from him.

The Hull family in America maintained distinguished positions in civil and military affairs. General William Hull, a soldier in the Revolution, was a highly educated and accomplished gentleman. He was among the first officers

chosen by President Madison for important command in the War of 1812. Unfortunately he became a victim of adverse circumstances and of resulting persecution in that war. He was the maternal grandfather of General Joseph Wheeler, a relationship of which the grandson was proud. Abraham Fuller Hull, brother of General William Hull, was a graduate of Harvard of the class of 1805. He was captain in the 9th infantry of the regular army, and fell at Lundy's Lane, July 25, 1814.

Mr. Joseph Wheeler, of Massachusetts, widower, removed to Augusta, Georgia, married in Massachusetts, September 12, 1825, Miss Julia Knox Hull, daughter of General William Hull. The bride was twenty-six years of age and her husband perhaps twenty years her senior. Her sister, Miss Maria, came to Augusta to live and subsequently married Mr. Edward Fennewick Campbell of that town. Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Wheeler lived happily on his ample fortune in the cultured, typical society of Augusta. The children born to them were: Lucy Josephine, January 5, 1830; Sarah Louise, October 25, 1832; William Hull, October 15, 1834, and Joseph, September 10, 1836.

Joseph Wheeler, of Augusta, was a gentleman of energy and thrift. He was first a merchant, investing his gains in a plantation and negroes. His entire fortune seems to have been lost in the panic of 1837, so generally disastrous to men of affairs. The determining cause of his wreck, however, was not careless management or extravagant living. He fell a victim to the peculiar habit of gentlemen of the south in those days—he stood surety for a friend, probably several friends.

At the age of thirteen years Joseph Wheeler, Jr., entered Cheshire Academy, Massachusetts, a diocesan school of the Protestant Episcopal Church, where he was known as a modest lad, perfect in deportment. He left his name chiseled on an outer corner of the school building. A half-century later, the nations had come to read in a thousand high places the name so inscribed. The alumni of the school, in annual banquet in New York, chose Joseph Wheeler president of their association.

In 1851, or about that time, the lad became a merchant's clerk in the city of New York. In 1854 he was appointed cadet to West Point. He received the appointment as from New York because it was conferred by John Wheeler, a representative in Congress from that state. "Point" soon became the nickname for the lad, the explanation being that he had neither length, breadth nor thickness. "Point" took little interest in athletic sports, but preferred to seek amusement in the library. Plutarch's Lives and the maps of famous battlefields interested him intensely.

Cadet Joseph Wheeler was graduated number nineteen in his class. He received prompt appointment as brevet second lieutenant of cavalry and was assigned to the 1st dragoons, E. V. Sumner colonel, Joseph E. Johnston, lieutenant-colonel, John Sedgwick and W. H. Emery majors. Robert Ransom was adjutant and J. E. B. Stuart quartermaster. For the first year, however, the young officer was on duty at Carlisle Barracks, a kind of training school. In the summer of 1860 he was promoted second lieutenant, with orders to report to Colonel W. W. Loring, of the Mounted Rifles, on frontier duty in Kansas territory and New Mexico. On frequent scouting parties, to suppress outbreaks among the wildest of savages, over the roughest of land, Wheeler performed faithfully every duty.

The enthusiastic young officer of the United States army is entitled to a consideration of the motives which prompted him to resign to make war upon the flag under which he was educated and had entered his chosen profession. The intellectual conclusions of Lieutenant Wheeler were reached under peculiar conditions, when he found at his door the call of duty to resign his commission. His entire period of youth had been spent in the north. Northern people were his blood kin and his active friends. The emergencies of the sections oppressed the principles of the Constitution of their Union. The eleven states of the Confederate government had 5,449,292 white population and 3,529,892 negro slaves. The south had been the controlling influence in the government from the beginning. Under an equitable taxation, the Walker tariff, the ratio of increase of wealth in

the decade 1850-60 of the southern states excelled the northern.

Georgia resumed the original sovereignty by solemn act on January 9th, 1861. In anticipation her militia laws had been revised and enlarged by the legislature of an earlier year, as other states had done. The north was equally active in military preparations before any state in the south had seceded. William Wheeler, the elder brother, living in Augusta, his native town, became captain of an artillery company. Lieutenant Wheeler, from his post in New Mexico, wrote this to his brother, the captain:

"Much as I love the Union, and much as I am attached to my profession, all will be given up when my state, by its action, shows that such a course is necessary and proper. If Georgia withdraws and becomes a separate state, I cannot with justice and propriety to my people, hesitate in resigning my commission."

CHAPTER II

1861-1862

PENSACOLA—MOBILE

The moment Lieutenant Wheeler heard of the acceptance of his resignation from the army of the United States he set out for the headquarters of General Braxton Bragg, at Pensacola. About ten miles south from the city on the western side of the bay was the United States navy-yard and lower down, yet near, were Fort Barrancas and Fort McRae. On the opposite side of this water, at the southern extremity of an island, was Fort Pickens. Pickens was strong, yet uncompleted and unoccupied. The navy-yard was fortified slightly, if at all, while Barrancas and McRae were not garrisoned effectively for defence. Some of the 1st artillery were there. Florida, in convention, passed an ordinance of secession January 10th, 1861. Lieutenant Adam J. Slemmer, U. S. A., had one company of this artillery at Barrancas. Assisted by the navy at anchor, near by, he moved the same day to Pickens, where reinforcements and supplies were sent by orders from Washington. The governor of Florida proposed to attempt capture of this strong position, held by an invading foe at the mouth of the best harbor on the Gulf, but southern senators, yet in Congress, Jefferson Davis among them, anxiously telegraphed their joint message to desist. "Pickens is not worth a drop of blood," they said.

General Bragg ordered some siege guns, found at Barrancas, to be mounted. The volunteer officers were at a loss how to proceed with the work. Wheeler had been promoted first lieutenant of artillery in the Confederate regular army. He took charge of mounting the guns and the work was so quickly and readily done, under his direction, that the

volunteers were profoundly impressed. In the Alabama troops, at Pensacola, were men of political importance—Pugh, Baker and others. They applied to President Davis for the promotion of Lieutenant Wheeler. The proposed beneficiary gave them this authority: "To the Honorable Secretary of War, L. P. Walker: I have the honor to apply for increased rank in the army." Some Alabama infantry regiments had already been formed. Among these was one from Cherokee and adjacent counties, all farmers, clothed in russet jeans. This regiment was numbered the 19th and Wheeler was given command with the rank of colonel.

General Bragg had something to say. He had already learned to submit uneasily to the dictations of the lawyer secretary of war, now Judah P. Benjamin. Bragg was an educated soldier, had won fame in war and had retained his army duties until a few years before, when he retired to manage his negroes on his large plantation in Louisiana in soldierly fashion. The general, in ill-concealed resentment, wrote to the secretary from his headquarters at Pensacola, under date of September 25, 1861: "You will pardon me for the freedom of addressing you, but the subject is of vital importance." Wheeler had been promoted without the general's recommendation. Other officers of superior rank who had resigned from the old army and whose names had been sent forward by the general were overlooked. He had nothing against Wheeler, but "a soldier's rank is as dear to him as honor, and more dear than life."

The letter continues: "The last feather, however, has broken the camel's back. The department, just before your entrance on its duties, came into their midst and selected one of the very youngest of their number for the grade of colonel. Lieutenant (Colonel) Wheeler is a very excellent officer and none envy him his good fortune in the field, but they cannot see the justice of the apparent reflection on themselves."

Brigadier-General Leroy Pope Walker, ex-secretary, was ordered to Mobile under Bragg, and to make up a brigade for him, Alabama regiments, newly organized, were assigned: the 14th, Colonel Thomas J. Judge, lawyer; the

17th, Colonel Thomas H. Watts, lawyer; the 18th, Colonel Edward C. Bullock, lawyer, and the 19th, Colonel Joseph Wheeler—the only professional soldier in the splendid brigade.

Brigadier-General Walker established headquarters in a handsome private residence on beautiful Government Street, Mobile, hung a painted tin sign at the front door indicating his presence within, distributed his regiments on the suburbs and seemed to await, in ease, developments. The subordinates, lawyers and planters from the up-country, took board at the "Battle House," the main hostelry, as they had always done, riding their horses from the livery stables daily or occasionally, perhaps, to the encampment. General Bragg seized an opportunity, amid the pressure of office duties at Pensacola, to visit Mobile. His high native sense of order was no little shocked. He went down the bay to Fort Morgan to settle a dispute of rank between two colonels of the garrison; he passed over to Fort Gaines, yet incomplete, and found the commander drinking too much whiskey. At a private dinner given in his honor on his return to the city, the general commanding, in the presence of many officers and ladies, turned down all his glasses—a wholesome and needed example from him.

Bragg called to Mobile from Pensacola Brigadier-General A. H. Gladden, a portly man of fifty years with snow-white hair and moustache and red face, a merchant of New Orleans who had won reputation as major of the "Palmetto" (South Carolina) regiment in the war with Mexico. Gladden at once concentrated the regiments, all unarmed, at Hall's Mills, twelve miles down the bay, put guards on all the roads to shut off exit to Mobile, and ordered away at once all men unfit for full military duty. He would have none but soldiers of perfect physical capacity and sobriety.

Colonel Wheeler had not lived at the Battle House, but in camp. He was present on duty there night and day. In the forenoon every day the officers' school of instruction, the sergeants' school, the corporals' school, were called. Company drill, battalion drill, inspection, dress parade, occupied the hours of daylight every day, and the colonel

was always present. Every soldier saw him absorbed in his duties; an approachable man at all times, punctiliously polite under all circumstances, never a profane or rude word from his lips. Not a man of distinctly martial bearing was the colonel of the 19th Alabama yet, withal, a thorough soldier to the ocular sense. His motions were quick, his decisions prompt and firm, his judgment just and accurate. This young officer measured but five feet two inches in height and weighed not quite one hundred pounds. He had large, dark-brown eyes, abundant dark hair and a dark, close-cropped beard, never shaved. Restless energy possessed him. Apparent to the observer was the earnestness of the man. Modest as he was, accessible to all, a smile seldom lighted his countenance.

The fall and winter months were passed by the 19th Alabama in the pine woods below Mobile. By December 1st Gladden's brigade had been reorganized, to consist now of the 18th Alabama, Colonel E. S. Shorter, lawyer, Colonel Bullock, lawyer, having died of fever; the 19th, Colonel Wheeler; the 22d, Colonel Z. C. Deas, a cotton broker of Mobile; the 23d, Colonel Frank K. Beck, lawyer, of Wilcox county; Lumsden's battery from Tuscaloosa, and Boykin's cavalry company from Dallas county. Colonel Deas impatiently awaited the rifles ordered on his personal account from a private manufactory at New Orleans. None could tell why the War Department could not or did not follow his example.

The government at Richmond concentrated the flower of the army to watch the seacoast; the government at Washington sent forces by sea, enough to threaten the coast, while concentrating its main strength in Kentucky and Tennessee. Bragg made no secret of his anxiety. The government at Richmond failed to comprehend the conditions. Bragg was never so wise as now. "We have the right men," he wrote to the secretary, "and the crisis upon us demands they be put in the right place." At the very beginning, not a few of the great men assembled at Montgomery were startled to see that behind the calm exterior and brave and true heart of President Davis there was not a sufficient

view of the work before him. There was no lack of industry, but lack of ability to combine resources; no absence of academic knowledge, but absence of practical method.¹ "We must cease to defend men and interests," wrote General Bragg, "and devote our energies to the cause." To Kentucky all armies from the Gulf Coast should go. Albert Sidney Johnston and Polk and Hardee were there without men.

General Bragg was a master in that art of war which a garrison requires. As chief of staff to a great strategist in the field he could have had no superior. He inspired the army under him at Pensacola with his own devotion to the cause. Reviews and other demonstrations of general discipline were held. The commanding general appeared, in full uniform, superbly mounted. Camps were rigidly inspected and the martial tone of the whole army assiduously improved.

Pickens had been heavily reënforced. General Bragg received information that the noted volunteer regiment from New York, Billy Wilson's Zouaves, was encamped on the island a few hundred yards north of the fort. He resolved to give his troops some foretaste of war and cripple the intruding foe, as far as circumstances permitted.

General R. H. Anderson was directed to prepare perhaps 1000 men for a night attack on the Zouaves in camp. The following recital will commemorate the spirit in which the army received the information: A company of handsomely uniformed infantry from Augusta, Georgia, was in line late in the afternoon for customary exercises. The captain, standing in front, asked for a stated number of volunteers, less than a score, to go that night on a perilous expedition. Promptly and eagerly at the word, every man stepped forward. The number was arbitrarily chosen. Among them was a boy of slight figure, who had left school to enlist. Seeing this, a youth of stouter frame and of longer service came to him with tears in his eyes and the offer of twenty-five dollars cash for the place. The offer was indig-

¹Letters of Thomas A. R. Cobb to His Wife.

nantly spurned.² The expedition was transported by steamer across the bay. The camp of the Zouaves was surprised and hastily abandoned, without any resistance, about midnight. No purpose to assault the fort was contemplated by the Confederates. Having routed, ingloriously, the enemy in sight, they withdrew as they had come. However, a flanking party from the fort attacked them on withdrawing and several Confederates were lost in the night skirmish.

²The boy was Willis J. Milner, who was promoted many months later major of the —— Alabama infantry and fought the war through.

CHAPTER III

1862

THE FIELD OF SHILOH

Two great rivers, flowing through the heart of the Confederacy, had their mouths upon the southern boundary of the United States. The Tennessee, passing the entire width of northern Alabama, turns almost at right angle north into Tennessee and empties into the Ohio at Paducah, opposite the Illinois shore. The Cumberland, passing through middle Tennessee, empties into the Ohio opposite the Indiana shore.

In the winter of 1861-62 the Confederate government built Fort Henry on the northern bank of the Tennessee, within the state of Tennessee, and built Fort Donelson on the southern bank of the Cumberland within the same state. These works were intended to prevent the invasion of Tennessee by the enemy on the streams.

Fort Henry, especially, was located badly, as surrounding hills commanded the position. General Lloyd Tilghman, a West Point man, was assigned to command. On February 10th, General Grant captured the position without serious difficulty. Immediately he marched the few miles separating Henry from Donelson and besieged the latter, supported by the gunboats under Commodore Foote. Two days' fighting, in which the gunboats participated, resulted in the flight of the Confederate commanders, Floyd and Pillow, the escape of Colonel Forrest and his cavalry and the capture of General S. B. Buckner and thousands of troops in the fort.

General A. S. Johnston was then at Bowling Green, General Polk was at Columbus and General Hardee was in central Kentucky. Johnston immediately ordered the con-

centration and retreat of all these troops upon Corinth, in northern Mississippi. General Bragg was ordered to carry to Corinth the bulk of his army from Pensacola and Mobile, and General Ruggles was ordered to take a fine body of troops from New Orleans to the same rendezvous. The invading foe could offer no resistance to the movements of Bragg and Ruggles. Far different in Kentucky. General Don Carlos Buell faced Johnston at Bowling Green; a large force stood before Polk at Columbus; the enemy occupied Louisville, confronting Hardee; General Grant, flushed with recent splendid successes at Henry and Donelson, stood so near the line of retreat at Nashville that the wonder was he failed to block it.

Halleck, from St. Louis headquarters, and Johnston now began to concentrate to fight the great battle of the war. The two rivers had been opened into the very vitals of the Confederacy. Promptly Halleck sent Grant to Pittsburg Landing, on the south bank of the Tennessee, a very few miles from Corinth, with about forty thousand western troops—the best troops of the army of invasion. The invader's strategy was to go from Corinth, by the Mobile and Ohio railroad, to Mobile, capturing Vicksburg and Demopolis—the one on the Mississippi and the other on the Tom Bigbee—the center of the rich prairie plantations, the granary of the middle west.

Grant was in camp three miles west of Pittsburg Landing, waiting for Buell to join him overland from Nashville and take command of the decisive expedition. This was the situation while Johnston labored, in imminent peril, to collect an equal force at Corinth from widely separated points. The difficulties encountered by the Confederate commander were most disheartening. From every quarter men of high position in civil life seemed to vie with one another in open detraction of him. A committee from Tennessee went to Richmond to plead with President Davis for his removal; a letter from Memphis prayed Mr. Davis to take command in person. The lower branch of Congress denounced him.

In response to the order to Bragg and Ruggles to march to Corinth, Governor Shorter, of Alabama, and

Governor Moore, of Louisiana, protested that the defenses of Mobile and New Orleans should not be weakened. Meanwhile, the ladies of Mobile worked with their needles, in concert, day and night, making bags for sand batteries. The parlors of Madame Le Vert were thronged with the workers. Johnston's troops concentrating at Corinth, from Alabama, were without arms by whole regiments. Colonel Z. C. Deas, of the 22d Alabama infantry, had ordered from a New Orleans manufactory 800 rifles for his regiment. They were received only after he reached Corinth. Peter Hamilton, chairman of the Mobile committee of public safety, heard that 2500 imported rifles for the Confederacy had been stopped at Havana. Private vessels were plying without interruption between Mobile and Havana. Why the delay in sending forward the arms! General Johnston had called on the governors of Alabama, Mississippi and Tennessee for 30,000 volunteers; the camp was established. Secretary Benjamin disbanded it because there were no arms! The government seemed confused.

The situation was most portentous. Arrived at Nashville he learned that President Stevenson of the one railroad which could be used to hasten forward his troops had gone ahead, taking his carriage and horses with him. Some troops were marched over the wagon roads to Decatur, Alabama, while others were loaded on the scanty transportation of the railroad, by way of Bridgeport, to Decatur.

The narrow territory lying between the Mississippi, running north, is an area of rich plantations known as west Tennessee. The town of Jackson lies at about the center. General Beauregard was at Jackson with a few thousand men, in wretched health and undisguised disappointment that he had left the army in Virginia, fresh from the laurels of Manassas, to come to the disorganized west. General Kirby Smith had a few thousand troops, largely without arms, at Knoxville.

In March, Bragg arrived at Corinth and reported to Beauregard, still at Jackson. He wrote a letter, the most doleful.

"The demoralized and disorganized condition of our forces from the right and left gives us great concern. There is some discipline left in those from the Gulf, but none whatever in the others, and the pressure upon us leaves but little time to give it and restore confidence. We are much distressed and disappointed, and shall be seriously damaged by the result at New Madrid.

"The whole country seems paralyzed and the difficulties of operation become infinitely greater thereby. Nothing is brought to us for sale and it is most difficult to procure supplies. The unrestrained habits of pillage and plunder have done much to produce this state of affairs and to reconcile the people to the approach of the enemy, who certainly do them less harm than our own troops.

"Our whole railroad system is utterly deranged and confused. Wood and water stations are abandoned; employes there and elsewhere, for want of pay, refuse to work; engineers and conductors are either worn down or, being northern men, abandon their positions."¹

With characteristic deliberation and firmness, General Johnston prepared his enthusiastic but crude forces for action. Bragg was placed as chief of staff, without relieving him, however, of direct command of his corps. Beauregard was second in command. The assembled troops were called "The Army of the Mississippi," three Corps d' Armée, with a division of John C. Breckinridge's Kentucky brigades, 6439 men, in reserve. The 1st corps, Polk's, with 9136 men; the 2d corps, Bragg's, with 10,731 men; the 3d corps, Hardee's, with 6789 men. There were about 4000 cavalry, in companies and regiments, without brigade organization. It would seem that the commanding general did not expect initial action from that arm. Colonel Forrest, with Tennessee cavalry; Colonel Clanton, with Alabamians; Major Brewer's battalion, two detached companies, Captain James Boykin's and Captain Robert W. Smith's, both from the prairie plantations of Alabama, were there. All were perfect masters of the horse and eager for the battle. Captain John H. Morgan, fresh from his maiden honors in Ken-

¹Off. War Rec.

tucky, was there and when the day was done had won his commission as colonel.

The concentration planned by General Johnston did not include the troops from Kentucky, Bragg's, from the Gulf coast, and Ruggles', from New Orleans only. He had been wisely put in command of those under Van Dorn, and Price in Missouri and Arkansas also, and these, numbering 15,000, were on the way to join him when the battle was precipitated, yet too far away to participate.

A very remarkable coterie of soldiers were the Confederate commanders. All save Breckinridge were from West Point, and he had fought in the war with Mexico. Johnston was sixty years of age, Beauregard less than forty, Polk less than sixty, Bragg and Hardee less than fifty, Breckinridge about forty. These officers were superb specimens of manhood and, clothed in the beautiful uniforms of their rank, they sat their horses the beau ideal of martial prowess and inspiration.

The Army of the Mississippi lay in bivouac, indifferently armed, some soldiers with fowling pieces only, about the town of Corinth. General Grant's army was twenty miles away, on a wooded plateau, the Tennessee river two or three miles to its rear. This plateau was covered thickly by scrubby oaks, the buds of spring just swelling and bursting. The surface was broken by occasional spots of mire, impassable to man or horse. There were ravines, too, now and then, some with banks too steep for a horse to descend or ascend. A few small cotton and corn farms broke the area of forest, Rea's, Sel's, Howell's. The wooded plateau where Grant's army lay in irregular encampment, without any pretense of fortification or line of battle, was open only at the west end, facing Corinth and Johnston. The Tennessee, as we have seen, bordered the east side, Lick Creek, unfordable, the south side, and Owl Creek, becoming Snake Creek as the water approached the river, the north side, also unfordable. The distance between Lick Creek and Owl Creek, by a line through Grant's camps, was about three miles, and this three miles was the battle front.

General Johnston reached Corinth in the last days of

March and found Beauregard there. Beauregard's rank was that of "general" and the field of battle lay within the limits of his command. He was suffering at this time from a wasting disease and lay on his bed most of the hours. His name, however, carried inspiration to an army. General Johnston went to him, proposing that he should take command of the battle. The generous offer was instantly declined, but Beauregard was greatly touched and long remembered it as a most impressive event in his life. The commanding general then insisted that his junior should prepare the plan of battle and write the battle order. These two duties he performed on his sick bed.

Wednesday afternoon, April 3d, marching orders were issued. Several days' rations were to be cooked and the haversacks filled. The battle order was read:

"HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE MISSISSIPPI,
"April 3, 1862.

"Soldiers of the Army of the Mississippi:

"I have put you in motion to offer battle to the invaders of your country. With the resolution and discipline and valor becoming men fighting for all worth living or dying for, you cannot but march to a decisive victory over the agrarian mercenaries sent to subjugate you and despoil you of your liberties, your property and your honor. Remember the precious stake involved; remember the dependence of your mothers, yourselves, your wives and your children on the result; remember the fair, broad, abounding land and the happy homes that would be desolated by your defeat.

"The eyes and hopes of eight millions of people rest upon you; you are expected to show yourselves worthy of your lineage, worthy of the women of the south, whose noble devotion in this war has never been exceeded in any time. With such incentive to brave deeds and with the trust that God is with us, your general will lead you confidently to the combat—assured of success.

"A. S. JOHNSTON,
"General."

The spring had been a wet season. The lowlands were

flooded, the earth everywhere like a saturated sponge. Those troops that advanced Wednesday afternoon, April 3d, went but a little distance. Thursday morning Hardee started in advance, Bragg after him, Polk next, and Breckinridge bringing up the rear. All day Thursday and Friday the slow march under drooping skies continued. The narrow roads became quagmires. General Johnston was profoundly disappointed. Friday, toward noon, he sat on his horse on the roadside with couriers and staff about him. Glancing at his watch, he exclaimed with more outward sign of annoyance than was common with him, "This is not war; it is puerile!" and dashing off at full gallop, he struck the head of Bragg's train, standing still. He ordered the troops behind to move around the wagons. The rain had melted the bread in the haversacks and none could be found for the time.

The whole army was placed in line Saturday, but too late to assume the offensive. There was a meeting of ranking officers, by accident, that afternoon. Beauregard feared the slow approach to the field could not have failed to warn the foe. Hardee was then in cannon shot of Sherman's tents. Beauregard spoke sharply to Polk of the tardy progress of the march. Polk replied, pithily, that he had orders to follow certain troops and had done his part. Beauregard suggested returning to Corinth, building fortifications, and there awaiting the enemy. Johnston said to Polk: "I will fight them if they are a million."

The men lay on their arms Saturday night, a scanty supply of provisions being brought to them. Hardee occupied the front line, extending across the ground from creek to creek almost; about four hundred yards to the rear of Hardee, Bragg's corps was drawn out in parallel line. Eight hundred yards behind Bragg was Polk, not deployed, but in column of brigades. Breckinridge, with some 6000, was immediately in the rear of Polk, held in reserve. When it appeared that Hardee's line did not cover all the distance between the creeks, Gladden's splendid brigade of Alabamians was advanced from Bragg's line to meet the defect. Military critics have objected to the alignment, saying that

Hardee should have formed two lines instead of one, and Bragg two, joining Hardee, instead of one line parallel to his rear. John K. Jackson's brigade, 2208, lay through the night in echelon with Gladden and James R. Chalmers' brigade of Mississippians to the extreme right, next Lick creek.

Jackson's brigade consisted of the 17th Alabama, Lieutenant-Colonel Farris; the 18th Alabama, Colonel Eli S. Shorter; the 19th Alabama, Colonel Joseph Wheeler, and the 2d Texas, Colonel Moore. To these was attached Captain Girardey's Georgia field battery.

General Johnston slept in a spring wagon about the center of Hardee's front line. Just before dawn his negro servant handed him from the bivouac fire a tin cup of coffee and a cracker. "Fire-eater," the large, highly-bred bay Kentucky friends had given him, stood ready, and at daylight he rode, dressed in the full uniform of his rank, with some of his staff toward the firing on Hardee's front. As the ride began, he remarked in encouraging tones: "We shall water our horses in the Tennessee to-night."

A regiment of skirmishers, thrown out on his own responsibility by a suspicious officer on the enemy's side, encountered Hardee's skirmishers, and this was the initial movement of the battle, the firing that General Johnston heard. A young captain of cavalry wrote of the opening day to his family:

"Regiment after regiment marched by just as the morning sun sent its first slanting rays out upon freshly budding forest trees and the birds came forth in search of their breakfast. The day was soft and cloudless and the men were jubilant in the prospect of the fight. Laughter and jest resounded, with no thought that in a few minutes hundreds must lie dead on the ground, to be walked over by their comrades and, shroudless, to be thrown into shallow trenches for graves when the day was done."

The forest was open for a part of the march. The troops advanced in perfect order. The enemy were taken by surprise most flagrant. Every mess was busy with cooking breakfast. Not a tent had been struck. General Grant

was ten miles away, at his headquarters on the river bank,—Savannah,—fast asleep.

Hardee's line was reinforced by Bragg at eight o'clock. From creek to creek the bloody conflict raged. Clanton's 1st Alabama cavalry rode along the northern edge of Lick creek to prevent the enemy's slipping any part of his forces through the thick brush and grass; Forrest, with his battalion, rode on the southern side. Both Clanton and Forrest took part in the great battle, but not in concert with each other. Bragg and Hardee became inextricably mingled. Colonels commanded parts of one another's regiments, but still the fight moved forward. General Johnston was found everywhere. No commander of a field had ever so mingled with his advancing columns. Grapple followed grapple and retreat retreat. The fighting was not a continuous roar of large and small guns, as at Chickamauga the next year. The pursuing Confederates re-formed their lines and fought again and again, forcing their brave foe back to the river, foot by foot.

Polk had already sent one brigade to assist Bragg, on the right, and then another to carry help to the left. About ten o'clock he moved forward and joined most gallantly in the mighty conflict. It was at this hour that an Alabama officer, seeing another officer riding leisurely and knowing him not, called to inquire, "How goes the battle?" "It is ours," was the smiling reply. "We have won a great victory!" These assuring words came from the lips of the commanding general.

But the enemy were fighting desperately still. General Grant arrived on the field and rode constantly from end to end of his line. Breckinridge's reserves, from their position in the rear, had confronted the demoralizing sight, the dead and wounded, for several hours. They now moved forward to mingle in the front ranks, where the fate of the day rested. General Breckinridge, in most serious mood, joining General Johnston, informed him that his men did not respond to his orders to advance. It was Statham's fine brigade of Kentuckians.²

²Duke's Morgan.

The commanding general, after speaking a few words of encouragement to Breckinridge, turned Fire-eater slowly down Statham's line, holding his hat high over his head. "His dress, majestic presence, imposing gesture and large bay horse made him a conspicuous mark." Suddenly, turning his horse and facing the foe, he called to the hesitating troops to follow him. They sprang forward impetuously and the movement drove the enemy before them. The day was practically won then.

From the very first, when the commanding general mounted his horse at his bivouac to ride to Hardee's firing line, he recklessly exposed his life at the front. "The battle had gone on like the regular strokes of some tremendous machine." Southwestern men were driving northwestern men all day. Gigantic was the conflict. There that weird song, never heard before, the rebel yell, broke upon the air. It was the cry of defiance from men who stood between the invader and their homes amidst the forests and on the prairies. General Sherman said, at the close of the four years' unparalleled fighting: "Shiloh was the hardest fought battle I ever saw."

From Statham's front, General Johnston rode to the foot of a low, wooded hill occupied by the enemy's batteries and infantry supports. Other brigades were forming there to drive the enemy. The general moved from place to place, assigning positions to each as it came up. Colonel William Preston, his aide and brother-in-law, had been sent off a short distance, and as he joined his chief again the general laughingly threw out one foot, showing how a bullet had ripped the toe of the boot. Preston went off the second time, and upon returning found General Johnston pale and evidently weakening in his seat. "Are you wounded, general!" cried the staff officer. Speaking with marked deliberation, the hero answered: "Yes, I fear seriously so." These were his last words. Preston, still mounted, assisted the wounded man to the ground and, slipping off his horse, laid him down, forcing a tickler of brandy to his lips. Death came immediately and without a struggle. The main artery of the thigh had been severed

and the great commander had bled to death almost unconsciously. Fire-eater, who had received several flesh wounds, in his pain, ran off.

The irreparable calamity was promptly reported to General Beauregard, in the rear of the field. He expressed his sorrow and his intense appreciation of the loss the army had suffered. Rather parenthetically, he said he supposed "the battle had better go on!" The officer to whom the surprising remark was made declared in effect that the battle had been won.

Bragg, Polk and Hardee continued to advance. Bragg, the ranking officer of the three, rode to and fro. His fine bay horse fell dead with a bullet in the brain. He mounted again, calling along the front, "Let every word be forward!"

There had been no firing for an hour before the army was called off by General Beauregard.³ Bragg, Polk and Hardee were re-forming their lines to capture the enemy, panic-stricken now and crowded, without organization, on the river bank. True, some field artillery had been put in firing position by the enemy, but these were guns that had been withdrawn from the battle. They were not in condition to offer serious resistance to the forces that had just driven them several miles. At this supreme moment of success, Bragg sent a courier, a young man from an Alabama cavalry company who acted for the day as his escort, back to General Beauregard with the inspiring news: "Tell General Beauregard we have won the day!" The message was quickly delivered. The reply was sent: "Tell General Bragg the army is withdrawn." Bragg heard with uncontrollable amazement. "My God! My God!" burst from his lips. Years later General Polk declared he would not have obeyed the order had it been delivered to him, as it should have been. The order, on the contrary, was distributed along his line, already formed to advance, and his brigades had begun the withdrawal before he was apprised of it.

³Duke's Morgan.

It was between four and five o'clock. Boynton⁴ says: "The Union gunboats, 'Tyler' and 'Lexington,' anchored off the ravine next above the Landing and near the close of the first day's fight, fired effectively upon the Confederate right flank and front, as the Union line was forced back toward the river. These boats continued the heavy shelling during the night to the great discomfiture of the Confederate camps."

Captain Basil W. Duke, then one of Morgan's cavalrymen, was on the field. Boynton was not on the field, liable to the shells from the gunboats. Duke says: "All night long the huge pieces upon the gunboats thundered at intervals with a roar that seemed like a bursting firmament. They had been opened during the afternoon, but, on account of the great elevation necessary to enable them to shoot over the bluffs, the shells had gone high in the air. These huge missiles came screaming louder than a steam whistle, striking off tops of trees and filling the air with dense clouds of smoke when they burst, but doing no damage."⁵

General Buell expected to find General Grant at his headquarters, Savannah. Hearing of the battle, he hurried on to Pittsburg Landing by steamer. Arriving there, he found Grant and his staff on one of the transports on board which their horses had been taken. This was about one o'clock and almost the hour General Johnston died. Buell says, as his boat approached the Landing he saw hundreds and thousands of Union soldiers hastening from the battlefield, making their way down the river bank. Snake Creek was filled with them, as they swam across. Utter demoralization and confusion prevailed at the Landing, infantry and artillery crouching under the bank to avoid the fire of the approaching enemy.

WHEELER'S REPORT

We shall now enter upon particulars of Colonel Joseph Wheeler's part in his first battle for the Confederacy. His official report of the field is as follows:

⁴The Americana.

⁵Duke's Morgan, p. 89.

"CAMP THREE MILES FROM SHILOH, TENN.,

"April 12th, 1862.

"When the first line opened the engagement, a few of our men were wounded by the scattering shots of the enemy. We were then ordered forward and entered the more advanced federal camp, behind the first line. We were then directed to move about a mile to the right and front, where we formed in the first line of battle and where we continued during the day. At this point General A. S. Johnston ordered the regiment, with his own lips, to charge the camps of the 59th Illinois regiment, to do which it was necessary to pass down a deep ravine and mount a steep hill on the other side.

"This duty was performed by the regiment, under a heavy fire from a screened foe, with rapidity, regularity and cool gallantry. But little resistance was offered after reaching the camps, as the enemy fled before us to the crest of the ravine back of us and about two hundred yards from the camp. After forming line in face of the enemy, we were ordered to lie down while the artillery was placed in position to our rear and fired over our heads sufficiently to shake their line.

"The regiment was moved forward rapidly, driving the enemy before it and dislodging him from every position where he attempted to make a stand, taking several prisoners and killing and wounding a large number.

"It was now about three o'clock in the afternoon. The regiment had been marching and fighting since half-past six in the morning, had been through three of the enemy's camps and in three distinct engagements. The enemy now being driven from all their positions on our right, we were ordered to march to the left and center, where a heavy fire was going on. The regiment changed front forward on the tenth company and marched rapidly by the right of companies to the front, some one and one-half to two miles in the direction indicated, coming up on the left of General Chalmers' brigade.

"The regiment, while marching through a burning wood, encountered a heavy fire from the enemy, who were drawn

up in front and to the right of a large camp, which fire the regiment returned with effect.

"I was here met by General Chalmers, who told me his brigade was worn out and overpowered by superior numbers, and said the troops must move to his assistance. The regiment then moved quickly to and in advance of his left and dislodged the enemy from a position they had taken in strong force, screened by a ridge and house. We advanced about two hundred yards, the enemy having retreated a short distance to another hill, where they were reinforced and in great measure secured from our fire.

"The regiment here exhibited an example of cool, heroic courage which would do honor to soldiers of long experience in battle. Subjected as they were to a deadly fire of artillery and a cross fire of infantry, they stood their ground with firmness and delivered their fire rapidly, but with cool deliberation and with good effect. During this fire, General Chalmers' brigade having retired from our view,—finding it necessary to move to the right in order to support Colonel Moore, who had just come up with his regiment, the 2d Texas,—we were met by a warm fire which was vigorously returned.

"At this moment the enemy raised a white flag, which caused us to slacken our fire; but as a large force of theirs, to the left of our front, continued a heavy fire (probably not knowing their commander had surrendered), I moved the regiment a few yards obliquely to the rear, to secure a more favorable position. This fire was soon silenced. Our cavalry moved up and conducted the prisoners (amounting to about 3000 men) out before us.⁶

"The regiment was then ordered to take charge of these prisoners and started with them to the rear, but was halted and formed in line, with orders to charge the enemy to the river; but after passing through the deep ravine, below the lowest camps, we were halted within about four hundred yards of the river," etc.

The official report of Colonel Wheeler's baptism of fire is remarkably clear in description; it is worthy of note that

⁶This was the surrender of Prentiss.

he does not write *my* regiment. "The" regiment, "our," "we," stand instead. General Johnston, in the heat of the fray, with his own lips ordered "the regiment." No doubt the general commanding spoke *viva voce* to the colonel and none other. Robert W Withers, aide-de-camp, bore frequent messages to Colonel Wheeler, "where the Yankee bullets were so thick, I imagined if I held up a bushel basket it would fill in a minute." The colonel received the staff officer with distinguished courtesy. "Yes, Captain, I shall do so with pleasure"—"Certainly, Captain, I move to the point at once."

The night with drenching rain fell upon the day of abandoned victory. The forest fires that were consuming the dead and helpless wounded were smothered in the down-pour, but the intense darkness confused the commanders of regiments and brigades. General Jackson could not find his brigade. Colonel Wheeler could find none of the regiments of the brigade save his own. Captain Girardy, with his guns, went into bivouac at Shiloh church and at dawn, Monday morning, threw shell into the forming ranks of the enemy.

Colonel Wheeler reported of the fight on Monday some interesting incidents. We see plainly that his superiors had taken notice of him in the first of his battles. The report continues:

"The regiment slept on their arms during the night. Early the next morning General Hardee came up with a body of troops and directed me to join him. After moving back a short distance, we were met by General Withers, who took immediate command of a brigade of which the 19th regiment formed a part and ordered us to move forward to support General Breckinridge. On reaching the ground, we were placed on General Hardee's left, and by his order the regiment was deployed as skirmishers before his whole command.

"After being again assembled, the regiment again advanced and engaged the enemy. About eleven o'clock General Chalmers' brigade came to our position and we remained attached to his brigade, continually engaging the

enemy until we were ordered to retire in the evening [afternoon], when we followed the brigade a short distance to the rear. General Withers here directed me to form a brigade by joining my regiment to some other troops which he placed under my command," etc.

The troops thus brigaded and placed under the colonel of the 19th Alabama formed the rear guard of the army abandoning the field.

General Breckinridge was stationed at Mickey's, toward Corinth, to superintend the passing of the broken troops. He reported to Beauregard at Corinth: "Colonel Wheeler of the 19th Alabama is here with about 100 of his men. His men are broken down, but he says he is ready to take command of any force given to him."

The Confederates were in deplorable condition on the way back to Corinth. On Tuesday, the 8th, General Bragg wrote to General Beauregard at Corinth that neither men nor animals had anything to eat and no prospect of anything. "If pursued," wrote Bragg, "we will lose all in the rear. The whole road presents the appearance of rout and no mortal power could restrain it. All is being done that can be done."

CHAPTER IV

1862

HOW A CAREER WAS SPRUNG

Ninety days of a most arduous campaign—a mighty battle won and lost—and Colonel Joseph Wheeler, on his merits, was published as a remarkable soldier. His name had become dear to every common soldier whom he led. The official reports of his superiors singularly abounded in praise of him on the great field of Shiloh. General Bragg, corps commander, reported to army headquarters “the noble service of Colonel Joseph Wheeler”; General Withers, division commander, reported, “Wheeler proved himself worthy of all trust and confidence; a gallant commander and an accomplished soldier.” General Chalmers, brigade commander, reported “the gallant Wheeler leading a charge and bearing the colors.”

April 10th Wheeler, commanding the rear, engaged with outposts of the foe that surgeons, nurses and wounded should be supplied with rations and medicines and not be molested. Demoralization was inevitable. Gun-carriages were left in the mud on the road; men and horses, so enfeebled by starvation that they could not be removed, were left to perish. Beauregard ordered: “Grant no passes to ladies coming to visit the wounded, for I am expecting another battle.” Grant declined to allow the Confederates to bury their own dead; he would perform that duty himself. Thus he replied to Beauregard.

Halleck came from St. Louis, taking command. Buell, John Pope, Grant and Sherman were under him. In the last days of April the march of the enemy upon the Confederates at Corinth began.

A score of miles away, behind breastworks and in rifle-pits, Beauregard's disorganized and jaded troops lay. On

the field of Shiloh Halleck rested through the entire month of April, gathering about him the flower of the western population. young white men—and never a negro! No, never a negro! He would, at discretion, move upon Corinth, brush the Confederates' armed force away, overrun Mississippi and Alabama, close the great river finally to the Confederacy, add Mobile to New Orleans, and Fort Pickens, military posts, and turning northward take Atlanta. So the invader planned.

General Halleck drew to him at Pittsburg Landing 120,000 men and, setting out for Corinth and Beauregard, he consumed the month of May in the march of twenty-three miles. Every road was corduroyed in advance of his columns. Crossroads connecting his wings were opened through the forest and corduroyed. Field-works were built at close intervals upon every mile of advance. If Beauregard moved out to attack, the invader was already fortified. Behind field-works Halleck might advance upon Beauregard.

The vicinity of Corinth was reached and fresh works were built all along the line of the enemy. His scouts reported impregnable works around the town; they reported also the arrival of night and day trains loaded with reinforcements for Beauregard. The assaulting party advanced at break of day, May 30th. No foe was found to resist. General Beauregard, with less than half the investing forces, had withdrawn in the night twenty miles on the railroad. The skill of this movement was remarkable. The railroad trains that Halleck's scouts had reported were empty cars, and the "reinforcements" were the cheering men sent from the camps at Corinth to meet the trains. The "deserters," upon whose representations the invader relied, returned to their colors as soon as their reports were made safe.

In the preliminary preparations for the evacuation Colonel Wheeler was assigned an important part. The day before the evacuation, May 28th, 300 or 400 infantry, including a remnant of his own regiment and 250 of Clanton's 1st Alabama cavalry, were placed under his orders to go

northward for several miles on a certain road on which the enemy were moving to participate in assault upon the works. The troops were disposed in a heavy swamp which lay on both sides of the road. Across the muddy creek there was a wooden bridge. The fighting soon opened. At irregular times the combat was renewed, but Wheeler held his own. He understood his orders—to delay the approach of the foe on that road. To obey orders and know their meaning was ever his forte. At nine-thirty o'clock on the evening of the 29th he withdrew, having lost six killed and ten wounded. Among the latter was Captain W. R. D. McKenzie, of the 19th Alabama.

At Tupelo Beauregard's health, bad for more than six months, completely failed. The army surgeon instructed him to retire promptly to the Bladen Springs, in the southern part of Alabama, that he might have the benefit of those famous waters. The distance was not great and the emergency was imminent. The general of the army at once reported to the secretary of war, from headquarters, his transfer of command to Major-General Bragg, and the cause, reporting the surgeon's order and the fact of his immediate departure for the health-giving resort. The president immediately resented the departure of the general of the army without leave from the War Office. Angry correspondence followed and Beauregard seriously thought of resigning, to reënter the service as colonel of a cavalry regiment. There had been bad blood between the men since the president struck from Beauregard's report of the battle of Manassas certain paragraphs.

Bragg assumed command and lay at Tupelo with some 30,000 men in unfavorable condition. The government had published months before "Rules and Regulations of the Army." General Bragg was an educated soldier and understood the obligation of army commanders. He was irascible, however, from his earliest service. He was very earnest. Now he could not brook the unmilitary bearing and the incompetence of many of the company officers, and others of higher rank. Defiant of the law of Congress, he proceeded to take away the authority of some and to appoint

others more acceptable to his own rigid ideas of capacity in the captains. For example, he made a captain of the orderly sergeant of a cavalry company, the sergeant receiving his commission most unexpectedly while engaged in a skirmish. The promotion was richly deserved. The commanding general heard that the adjutant of the cadet corps of the University of Alabama, Richard H. Clarke, had left the university and was then present in the army. The young man was called to army headquarters and there ordered to take command of an infantry company, regardless of the law providing for the filling of the office. The secretary of war interfered and the commanding general's usurped authority was short-lived.

Bragg manifestly was in a perilous position. The hardening period had not passed with the bulk of his troops and the mortality among them became serious. At Corinth 120,000 choice troops confronted him. Mobile was threatened from sea and was badly prepared for defense. All northern Alabama and all middle Tennessee were occupied by the invader.

Major-General Edmund Kirby Smith was in command of the department of east Tennessee, with 5000 men; his headquarters were at Knoxville. Smith, about thirty-five years of age, was the son of a New England man who had settled early in life in Florida and there married into the distinguished family of Kirby. Edmund Kirby, son of this union, graduated at West Point, without special distinction, but upon his immediate assignment to the army he engaged in the war with Mexico, winning much reputation under General Taylor at all the battles fought by that intrepid commander. He was, after Buena Vista, ordered to General Scott at Vera Cruz, and followed that invincible leader throughout the war.

Smith was made captain of the line in the 2d dragoons at its organization. He grew rapidly in reputation. When Florida seceded, he resigned and offered his sword to the Confederacy. When General J. E. Johnston took command at Harper's Ferry, Smith was made adjutant-general and assigned to that army. While yet at that post he was

promoted brigadier-general. By a forced march, he led his brigade upon the right flank of McDowell's advancing column, where he was immediately unhorsed by a shot. Elzy executed his plan and the enemy fled in confusion.

Bragg, at Tupelo, received a letter from Smith at Knoxville. Bragg was urged to escape from his perilous position in Mississippi, come to east Tennessee with all his army and make that section his base.¹ The argument was, convenient supplies and the strategical advantages of the position for the protection of the Gulf states east of the Mississippi. General Bragg was impressed favorably with the views presented to him and promised to transfer his army. He requested Smith to clear middle Tennessee of the several posts, outside of Nashville, held by the enemy, and to send a cavalry force into Kentucky to disturb the transportation lines there. In preparation for this transfer from Tupelo General Smith sent Forrest into middle Tennessee, where his operations were wonderfully successful, resulting among other performances in the capture of Murfreesboro at daylight, July 13th, 1862. At the same time, John H. Morgan was sent into Kentucky and greatly harassed the enemy there.

General Bragg, at length, was prepared to move from Mississippi to Chattanooga. A part of his army was carried on the railroad to Mobile, thence to Montgomery, on to Atlanta, thus reaching its destination. The other part, as to infantry, was carried through Demopolis to Selma and by way of Blue Mountain and Rome. The cavalry was marched through northern Alabama.

President Lincoln had seen the importance of east Tennessee to the Confederacy even before Smith pointed the fact out to Bragg. After Shiloh, he wrote to Halleck: "To take and hold the railroad at or east of Cleveland, in east Tennessee, is fully as important as the taking and holding of Richmond."

Still at Tupelo, Bragg sent for the brigadier commanding his cavalry. This was James R. Chalmers. Chalmers was

¹General Kirby Smith, p. 203.

in bad health. He required a scalpel. Colonel Wheeler, of the 19th Alabama infantry, was then sent for to report in person at army headquarters. He was informed of the contemplated transfer of the army and instructed to take the cavalry, go in the rear of Halleck, at Corinth, and into west Tennessee, spreading the news of an advance of the whole army close behind him.

In this expedition the career of Joseph Wheeler in the Confederate cavalry service began. His report follows:

“HEADQUARTERS CAVALRY BRIGADE,
“Holly Springs, Miss.,
“August 1st, 1862.

“General: I beg to report that on the 19th ultimo I received orders to relieve General Chalmers in command of the cavalry brigade. I learned from him that part of the brigade had been ordered to select some point in Mississippi to recuperate their horses and the balance were then marching by regiment toward Tupelo. Every possible exertion was made to intercept the command and order it back towards Holly Springs; but, on account of the regiments being much separated, it was impossible to concentrate sufficient force to accomplish any object before the 25th ultimo, at which time I started towards Tennessee with parts of Jackson’s, Wade’s, Pinson’s and Slemmon’s regiments—in all about 1000 men.

“On my first arrival at Holly Springs, in accordance with instructions, I called upon General Villepigue for some infantry to aid in attacking the garrison at Grand Junction and in destroying the railroad above that point; but as the enemy left Grand Junction the night of the 23d-24th, the same night I left Abbeville, I ordered the infantry to return as soon as they made the impression that a general advance of our forces was intended in the direction of west Tennessee. The enemy left about two hundred bales of cotton at the Junction, which was destroyed the next day.

“My plan was, to menace the enemy at Bolivar, burn the railroad bridges between that place and Jackson, then concentrate at Wellwood and attack Jackson, destroying the

stores (military) and cotton at that place. Before reaching Jackson, by about ten miles, Colonel Jackson's regiment was ordered back by General Villepigue, leaving me with but 500 men. All the ferries over the Hatchie river had been destroyed by the enemy, which obliged our troops to swim or ford.

"While driving in the enemy's pickets on the northwest and south of Bolivar, we so thoroughly shut them in as to enable us to send out a large number of squads to burn cotton, which had been seized or purchased by the enemy. This we continued to do during the entire expedition, burning in all about three thousand bales, a greater part of which had been sold to the enemy and much of it transported to their strongest posts; but so great was their alarm that they allowed us to burn cotton almost in sight of their entrenched positions.

"I sent a man into Bolivar, before attacking their pickets, to inform the commanding officer that a large force was advancing, which so increased their alarm as to cause General McClernand to reinforce Bolivar from Jackson and Humboldt with three thousand men and to call for further reinforcements from Corinth, which were promptly sent to him; and also to keep their troops under arms for more than two days and nights. A few hours after the federals had passed from Jackson to Bolivar, the railroad bridge and telegraph wire over Clover Creek were burned and the federal guard kept at bay by a detachment under Colonel Pinson. The next night we so succeeded in drawing off the enemy as to enable another detachment to drive off the guard above Jackson and burn a high trestle work for a distance of twenty yards, at a point about eight miles above the place. The telegraph was also destroyed a considerable distance. In this we were aided by a company of twenty-three partisan rangers under Captain Henderson, who reported to me for duty as I entered Tennessee. In crossing the river, this detachment was attacked by the enemy and at first thrown into confusion, but they soon rallied and drove the enemy from the field.

"In this engagement some men and horses were taken

by the enemy, but they were recaptured by us in an engagement the following morning, at which time we thoroughly defeated the enemy capturing forty prisoners, with their arms and horses. We also attacked the enemy near Middleburg, driving them from the field and capturing prisoners, arms, horses, wagons and three hundred bales of cotton en route to Bolivar. The cotton was burned and other property brought to our lines. We also captured the blockhouse, destroyed railroad trestles and tore up the railroad for many miles.

"Having received orders from department headquarters to return with all the command except one small regiment, I was obliged to abandon my intention of making a demonstration upon Jackson, and therefore returned immediately to this place by way of Summerville, arriving on the evening of August 1st.

"With 500 cavalry, much worn and jaded by previous service and privation, we penetrated some seventy miles beyond the enemy's lines, destroyed the railroad bridges in his rear, and met him in eight separate engagements, in all of which, except the skirmish of Captain Henderson, he was thoroughly defeated, many of his horses and men killed and wounded, or captured by our troops, who were only prevented from continuing their pursuit by the close proximity of large bodies of the enemy."²

²Official War Records, Series 1, vol. XVII, p. 23.

CHAPTER V

1862.

THE KENTUCKY CAMPAIGN

General Bragg reached Chattanooga July 31st. The men under his command at Tupelo had felt the harshness of his methods of discipline, but all this was now overlooked by them and the people at home. His fame, won at Shiloh, and his known ardor of faith in the cause, satisfied both army and people.

General Richard Taylor,—a neighbor and intimate associate of the commanding general in Louisiana, where both were wealthy planters,—under orders for service in the Trans-Mississippi Department, passed a few hours to make a friendly call upon him. Bragg at once importuned Taylor to relinquish his journey across the river and go with the army as chief-of-staff. Dinner was announced, and at table, where a number of staff officers sat, Taylor inquired of his host concerning certain officers of rank, then members of that army. The general gave no good report. One was an "old granny," another was excessively peculiar, and so on. Taylor secretly decided he would avoid service under a commander whose personal antipathies to his subordinates were so pronounced.

General Bragg was a brave man and a great soldier—if assigned to the right duty. As chief-of-staff to a strategist he was invaluable, as, for example, to Albert Sidney Johnston at Corinth. Johnston's wisdom had assigned him to a position where his peculiar talent developed itself. He was a soldier in bearing, and in habit. The reputation he won in Mexico constituted his claim for recognition in the army of the Confederacy at the outset. Some characteristic tales survive of him, as he appeared in Mexico—his vein of sarcasm and his inordinate love of details in the

work at hand. May's dragoons had already won distinction and their commander had received one or more brevets. Colonel May was ordered, as Taylor's army moved into Mexico, on a reconnoissance, and Major Ben McCullough was sent out with a separate command in the same direction. McCullough reported that he had gone upon the top of a lofty peak, overlooking the position of the enemy, and had with his own eyes computed the number to be 20,000. Upon May's return, in making his report he gave the enemy the same number. When May explained that he had his information only from a Mexican deserter, Captain Bragg cried out: "I see it is harder to lose a reputation than to make one!"

After the battle of Monterey, Captain Bragg ordered Lieutenant S. G. French to go a considerable distance back to get the short swords from the dead Mexicans and the artillery harness from dead Mexican horses. General Taylor crossed the lieutenant's way and, accosting him, enquired the reason of his unexpected appearance at that point of the field. Upon being informed, he commanded him to go back.

The general commanding remained for nearly the whole of August at Chattanooga, organizing his army and arranging with General Smith for coöperative movement from Knoxville. The initial of the plan to make east Tennessee the base for operations in the middle west seemed satisfactory. President Lincoln had foreseen this movement and had warned his generals against it. In response, Halleck sent Buell from Corinth to march to Chattanooga. The order failed of execution for two reasons: The first was that it required Buell to repair the railroad, which was in an extremely bad condition, as he proceeded, and he moved slowly; the second reason was that Bragg, from Tupelo, had sent Forrest into middle Tennessee to destroy the road and depots of the enemy, and to capture the depot garrisons. And this commission had been fulfilled even beyond the expectations of the commanding general.

Bragg did not carry with him all the troops that were in northern Mississippi. He left those that had crossed from

beyond the Mississippi, soon after Shiloh, under Van Dorn and Price, with instructions to attack Rosecrans at Corinth, either to capture the position and its garrison or to disable him from interference in Tennessee. Van Dorn assaulted the works at Corinth on October 3d, at ten o'clock in the morning, and the battle continued until the afternoon of the day following. Some of the Confederates entered the town, but the position was not captured. Corinth was left in possession of the invader and it was the farthest point within the Confederacy held by the Union army.

General Smith, from Knoxville, met General Bragg at Chattanooga, immediately upon the arrival of the latter and the two passed most of the night in conference. It was agreed that Smith should assault Cumberland Gap on the road from Knoxville to Kentucky, which was then held by General George W. Morgan with some 9000 Union soldiers, and, in addition, a position of great natural strength well protected by fortifications. Smith being thus employed, Bragg would move forth from Chattanooga into middle Tennessee and capture Nashville.

On the night of August 16th, Smith moved out from Knoxville. It was not his purpose to assault Cumberland Gap, however. He sent Major-General Stevenson, with 10,000 men, to that position to threaten it only. Then, leading in person Cleburne's and Churchill's divisions (6000 men), he flanked Morgan by way of Roger's Gap. Meantime Heth, with a part of his division (3000 men), crossed the mountains by Big Creek Gap. Colonel Scott, with nine hundred cavalry, and a battery of mountain howitzers, went in advance to Barboursville, Kentucky. Colonel John H. Morgan was already in Kentucky, occupied with the destruction of the Louisville and Nashville railroad and the depots of supplies found on that line for Buell, at Nashville.

On August 28th, 1862, General Bragg crossed the Tennessee from Chattanooga, Major-General Leonidas Polk in command of the right wing, 13,537 strong, and Major-General W. J. Hardee in command of the left, 13,763. Major-General S. B. Buckner commanded a separate divi-

sion and Colonel Joseph Wheeler a part of two regiments of cavalry. General Buell, having heard of the advance of Bragg, withdrew the garrisons from Decatur, Decherd, Bridgeport, and other points, to Nashville and increased the fortifications of the town.

Bragg's progress to Murfreesboro, the center of a splendid agricultural region thirty miles east of Nashville, was unopposed by organized resistance. The cavalry, however, was employed without ceasing in driving from elevated points parties of observation, sent out in considerable numbers from Nashville. Scouts of the invader perched in tall trees, upon mountain peaks, to watch the march of the troops on the narrow roads below. The second day of the march Colonel Wheeler discovered a picket-post at Altamont, the summit of a mountain spur. He laid plans to capture it. Leading a select party of his men for this purpose, at dead of night he ran unexpectedly upon a brigade of infantry in bivouac, concealed in the gorges. This infantry was so taken by surprise that they fled in disorder to Altamont without firing a gun. Wheeler pursued. At Altamont he ran into the pickets about dawn, captured some officers and soldiers and dispersed the post. Fugitives escaping to Nashville reported to General Buell that the Altamont post had attacked Hardee's corps and driven it, pell-mell, down the mountain. This information was about the first news Buell had of Bragg's crossing the Tennessee.

We return to General Kirby Smith and his coöperating army. While Stevenson invested Morgan at Cumberland Gap, Smith, with Cleburne, Heth and Churchill, moved across the line into Kentucky, pausing at Barbourville, some eighteen miles within that state. There he sent a dispatch to General Humphrey Marshall, in southwest Virginia, saying he would move forward to Lexington, leaving Stevenson to take care of Morgan. Would Marshall participate, and move with all haste into Morgan county, Kentucky, to unite forces there? At the same time, General Smith wrote to President Davis of his march, and that he must fall back into east Tennessee to support his troops or

he must move forward into the famed blue-grass region of Kentucky.

General Smith decided to go forward. Colonel John H. Morgan dispatched that he had destroyed the Louisville and Nashville railroad tunnel, and that no fear of Buell need be entertained if Bragg continued to move upon Nashville.¹ The country was mountain wilds, with water very scarce. Colonel Scott, with his cavalry, advanced. The Confederates had marched over one hundred miles of this country. To return was a physical impossibility. The enemy, under General Munson, some 8000 strong, began to demonstrate in front, but Scott with his mounted men perfectly protected the army from observation. The enemy could obtain no information and evidently believed Scott was out on a raid only. Smith's entire command was now some 6000 strong. Big Hill had been descended and the magnificent green of the valley farms lay before the weary, foot-sore and hungry troops.

The enemy lay in the open country about Richmond. "They occupied both sides of the pike with artillery in the center." Cleburne advanced at daybreak, but soon was wounded and removed to the rear, leaving Preston Smith to take his place. Here was fought the action of Mount Zion, one of the combats of that memorable day. The foe was beaten and driven from the field. Within a mile he rallied, received reinforcements, with considerable field artillery. An hour afterward the combat was renewed with the utmost impetuosity by the Confederates. Churchill ran upon the main force of the enemy and his line wavered, but right nobly did he by voice and example restore order and lead the renewed charge up to the point of the bayonet. The enemy fled, leaving one of their fine pieces and hundreds of dead and wounded.

This was the second battle of the day, Wheat's Farm, and from its bloody ground General Smith moved forward still, though the men who had been fighting since daylight without water were quite worn out with fatigue. The stone walls about the town were yet to be passed. Behind these

¹General Kirby Smith, p. 207.

lay the gallant foe. It was three o'clock. Colonel Scott was informed of the purpose to fight a third battle and carry the town. He was instructed to ride around Richmond and to take position on the road to Lexington, that he might harass the beaten army in retreat.

At five o'clock the Confederates advanced. Major-General Nelson had arrived and now took command of the enemy—7500 troops from camps of instructions and 2500 veterans. General Smith at sunset had many thousands of prisoners, among them General Nelson. That night Nelson and thousands of his men walked away. Next morning 6000 were paroled.

Scott had planned well. He masked his battery on the Lexington road and put in ambush his dismounted cavalry. As the road filled with fugitives from the battle, he opened fire on them. The havoc was frightful. Here the second in command, General Manson, was captured. All the enemy's artillery and splendid equipment—wagons, teams, blankets, clothing, stores, etc.—became spoils of the victors.

General Smith moved, with the precision and alacrity of a buoyant soldier, onward to the magnificent blue-grass of Kentucky, halting at Lexington. Before leaving the field of Richmond he dispatched to Bragg, in the vicinity of Murfreesboro, explaining his movement, based upon his recent success. He urged his superior to leave off the projected campaign in middle Tennessee that he might accomplish the original design more effectually by moving into western Kentucky. Bragg read the message with elation, at once turned northward for Sparta, with Nashville well off to his left, and Buell flanked. He was bound for Kentucky. At Pensacola, twelve months before, he had urged the president to concentrate an invincible army on the Ohio and thereby save Kentucky to the Confederacy. With the old thought in mind, and rejoicing in the news from his fellow soldier, now at Lexington, he issued a spirited address to his troops and had it read at the head of each regiment:

"HEADQUARTERS DEPARTMENT, No. 2,

"Sparta, Tenn., September 5, 1862.

"General Orders:—

"No. 128.

"I. The signal triumph of our arms in Virginia over the combined forces of McClellan and Pope (second Manassas) had hardly been announced to the whole of this command, before we are again called upon to rejoice and give thanks to God for a victory as brilliant and complete, achieved in our own campaign by the troops under Major-General Kirby Smith at Richmond, Kentucky, on the 30th ultimo.

"II. Alabamians, your state is redeemed. An arrogant foe no longer treads her soil. Tennesseans, the restoration of your capital and state government is almost accomplished without firing a gun. You return to your invaded homes, conquerors and heroes.

"Kentuckians, the first great blow has been struck for your freedom. The manacles will soon fall from your limbs, when we know you will arise and strike for your freedom, your women and your altars."

Forrest joined the marching army at Sparta. He was ranking cavalry officer, being the only brigadier. But General Bragg had already discovered Wheeler and had no thought of permitting the young leader to be a subordinate in the mounted arm of the service under him. He expected with good reason, the most active work for the cavalry and was delighted to contemplate Wheeler's use of his opportunity. Forrest never forgot, nor forgave, General Bragg.

The race of the rival armies for Kentucky now began. Bragg made no attempt to use the Louisville and Nashville railroad. The wagon roads were firm, supplies abundant on the farms, his army buoyant with the news from Kentucky. Buell used the railroad to transport his artillery and supplies. Colonel Wheeler and General Forrest operated successfully in delaying Buell by tearing up the railroad. Forrest had captured at Murfreesboro four pieces of light artillery and had been permitted to keep them. These he used with effect now.

Wheeler, turning southwest, attacked the advancing column of Buell at Gallatin, Tennessee, on September 8th. The next day he struck it at the state line. That day he also fought near Franklin and on the road to Scottsville. On the 10th he struck the railroad, and Buell telegraphed to Thomas, left at Nashville, the disastrous effect.

On the night of September 11th Colonel Wheeler laid in ambush, in the vicinity of Woodburn, with purpose to attack as the enemy broke camp early the next morning. His plan was not carried out quite successfully in all its details, for the alert enemy discovered it, halted and formed a line of battle. Hardee, to whom he reported in this campaign, had given specific orders several days before to "feel the enemy and harass him, without endangering your own command." The plan of ambush having failed, no justification for forcing an action remained. Wheeler marched off two miles and there fed his horses, carrying with him a captain and several soldiers captured from Crittenden's corps. The enemy sent both cavalry and infantry to overtake him, and while the horses were eating, this detachment came up and a hot battle followed.

Colonel Wheeler finally fell back slowly, watching for an expected separation of the enemy's infantry from their cavalry, which he maneuvered to effect, with the purpose of attacking each in turn. The enemy, however, turned back and were pursued to their own lines.

Hardee put Bennett's regiment under him. The remainder of the 1st Alabama and of the 1st Texas, or "Rangers," now arrived, and also the 3d Alabama Cavalry, under Colonel James Hagan. Hagan was an imposing figure, a notable horseman, trained for service in the Mexican War. He had become an Irish citizen of Mobile, and in no little degree distinguished as the successful suitor for the hand of the famous belle of Alabama, Miss Bettie Oliver.

Bragg was well advanced on his march by this time and Buell, with the advantage of the railroad repaired from Confederate attacks, as he marched, moved on a parallel line to the left. The former reached Glasgow September

13th. Buell simultaneously arrived at Bowling Green, the two towns being connected by good roads. Smith was now at Lexington in almost due line east, about fifty miles away. At Bowling Green General Thomas, from Nashville, overtook and joined Buell. Military Governor Andrew Johnson, of Tennessee, had telegraphed meanwhile to the president that Bragg's invasion of Kentucky was a ruse to escape Buell, after enticing him thither; that Bragg intended to hasten back to seize Nashville.

It was Bragg's purpose to rest at Glasgow and feed his horses on the abundance of the country. He was extremely careless in the watching of General Buell, whose intention, he well knew, was to beat him to Louisville. Indeed, the Confederate commander seems here to have lost his military sagacity and to have forgotten the military science in which he was educated.

At Glasgow General Bragg heard that General Chalmers, on outpost duty to the north, had been repulsed in an unauthorized attack upon the fortified town of Munfordville. Mortified at such a result of the first engagement of his troops on their arrival as redeemers of Kentucky, he put his army in motion for that place with the intention of capturing it. Forrest, meantime, rode to the north and put his command in position to capture any part of the garrison of 4000 men that might escape Bragg. On September 17th Bragg arrived at Munfordville and received the surrender of the garrison, 4267 men, together with a large amount of stores.

General Bragg did not appreciate Forrest; he did not like the man. Thus, about ten days after the capture of Munfordville, he ordered the cavalry leader, the ranking officer of that arm in his army, to turn his entire brigade, except four Alabama companies and his personal staff, over to Colonel Wharton, of the 1st Texas, the old Texas Rangers, and proceed with the four companies and his staff to Murfreesboro, there to organize a new brigade. The ostensible reason was that the enemy were moving out of Nashville in marauding expeditions.

Buell, reinforced at Bowling Green by Thomas, re-

solved to attack Bragg at Glasgow. Wheeler discovered this purpose and made the following report:

"The next day we proceeded to Merry Oaks, a place midway between Bowling Green and Glasgow, to cover our army and watch the movements of the enemy. We remained at this point, watching the several approaches to Bowling Green, until the 16th, when we moved down to Oakland Station, within seven miles of Bowling Green, leaving a small force at Merry Oaks to watch the movements of the enemy on the two lower roads.

"That night the enemy moved Rousseau's division and a large cavalry force over the river on the Glasgow or Cave City pike, while at the same time more extensive arrangements were being made for a movement across the river in a northerly direction, which led me to believe the bulk of General Buell's army was to move in that direction. This was also the opinion of all my agents who had been into the town. In this we were deceived."

Buell was engaged only in moving two thousand empty wagons, under light guard, northward to Louisville. The report resumes:

"About daylight the enemy's cavalry in large force moved up rapidly in good order toward Cave City, followed by infantry. Finding that they had passed our position, we moved by a circuitous route to gain their front, having previously directed Colonel Lay to remain at his post until our arrival, in order that our combined forces might more effectually retard the enemy. Orders were also sent to the battalion at Merry Oaks to join me at the same place. On arrival there [Dripping Springs] I found Colonel Lay had been gone sometime, and also heard the detachment at Merry Oaks had been driven in by a large force of cavalry. After resisting the enemy's advance until late in the day, we finally moved toward Glasgow to collect all detachments on the lower roads and to protect some trains at that point.

We then proceeded to Munfordville, arriving at that point about eight o'clock the next morning.

"Our total loss in killed and wounded was two officers and three privates.

"At night we moved down to Horse Cave to picket the front and watch the enemy, who was concentrating his troops at that place. On the morning of the 20th the enemy advanced and deployed their lines in advance of their advanced pickets. Our army being now moving from Munfordville, our front was kept unchanged and every effort made to prevent the enemy from learning our movements.

The enemy continued deploying their lines all day and in the morning commenced their advance. Our pickets held their ground so well that it was noon before my main body became engaged, which had fallen back to a point about four miles from Green River. Here the enemy advanced in line of battle upon the 1st and 3d Alabama regiments. After a heavy engagement, the enemy, finding they were simply opposed by cavalry, sent a brigade to turn our right flank. After a gallant resistance and a handsome charge by the 1st Alabama, in which Lieutenant-Colonel T. B. Brown was killed, both regiments were compelled to retire slowly, but in good order, to prevent being entirely cut off, the enemy's dense lines of infantry being in full view and within range, both in front and on the right flank."

An incident of this fight illustrates the temper of the armies in that early stage of the great war. Colonel Wheeler sent a brother of Lieutenant-Colonel Brown, under a flag, into the enemy's lines, to request the delivery of the dead body. The United States officer who received the messenger answered that the body had been taken already from the field to a near-by residence, properly prepared for burial, and buried; that the dead Confederate officer's watch had been taken in charge by an officer. Long after the fall of the Confederacy this watch was restored to a daughter of the dead soldier.

The report continues: "Our artillery, consisting of two guns, attached to Colonel Wharton's and my own brigade, had been placed upon the north side of the river and commenced good work as soon as the enemy came within

its range. The 1st and 3rd Alabama regiments retired slowly and were finally compelled to cross the river, which was done in good order. The lines were again formed on the north side of the river, and as the enemy came up we received them warmly with cavalry and small arms. The enemy, discovering that our army had left Munfordville, sent an infantry brigade to turn our right flank. We contested the crossing under a heavy fire of artillery and infantry until this brigade had crossed the river, about a half-mile below the town, and was advancing in line perpendicular to our lines. We then fell back about three hundred yards and again formed our lines, which allowed the enemy to cross several brigades of infantry and a large force of cavalry, all of which promptly formed line of battle, engaging us as they came up. Their cavalry sounded the charge, but could not be moved toward us. After a short but severe fight, the sun went down and we slowly withdrew.

"We were obliged to move on some eight miles that night to procure forage and water. Early in the morning Colonel Wharton, with his brigade, moved farther on, some miles, to Red Mills, to procure rations. The enemy's advance reached me about noon. My brigade was moved rapidly to a favorable position to receive him. The artillery and most of my cavalry were held inactive until the head of a column of not less than 1500 cavalry had arrived within about three hundred and fifty yards of our position, when we opened upon them with canister and shell, killing and wounding many men and horses. The enemy deployed as skirmishers and brought up their artillery, engaging us warmly until dark, when they went into camp."

Smith made dispositions to capture the garrison that evacuated Cumberland Gap, in his rear, but Morgan escaped with it to Cincinnati.

General Nelson, having escaped from his captivity at the battle of Richmond, was now in command at Louisville. Smith sent Cleburne's and Churchill's divisions out

on the Shelbyville pike, in front of that city. Buell, yet on the march, dispatched to Nelson not to attempt to hold Louisville if seriously attacked, and Nelson gave notice at Cincinnati to expect his arrival there under certain conditions. Buell, at this stage of the parallel marching against Bragg, evidently expected more from the Confederate than was accomplished by him. Bragg did not fight at Cave City, as Buell seemed to expect. On the contrary, he uncovered his front by retreat to Bardstown.

General Bragg, advancing, sent to Mobile for the famous newspaper editor, John Forsyth. Forsyth prepared in the name of the general an eloquent appeal to the north-western states to unite with the Confederacy. This was the movement of Stephen A. Douglas, as we remember, at the outset of the government. The address was published at Bardstown, September 26th, 1862. The northwest was assured that as soon as that section lost connection with the south, the east would pillage it. "It is from the meddlesome, grasping and fanatical disposition of the east, which has imposed upon you and us alike those protective tariff, internal improvement and fishery bounty laws, whereby we have been taxed for their aggrandizement, that both upper and lower Valley people should free themselves." The west was urged to consider the enormous debt of the government in the prosecution of the war, which that section, the only producing part left of it, would have to pay. The only escape was in a southern alliance.

Forsyth wrote yet another address for General Bragg. This one was to the people of Kentucky, urging them to flock to him and seize the wagon-loads of arms he had brought with him for their use in his ranks. Major-General Buckner was, when he left Kentucky for the Confederate army, the ranking officer of the militia of his state, which he had organized to a condition of unusual efficiency. He was esteemed the most influential man in his state among the young men. Bragg, taking Buckner with him, rode to Frankfort to see Hawes, the secession governor, inaugurated.

While Bragg went from Bardstown to capture the com-

paratively small post of Munfordville, with its 4000 garrison, Buell marched on to Louisville unmolested. So the Confederate general, one time so enterprising and successful in his campaign, now threw away his great opportunity. Nelson, in Louisville, hearing of Bragg's unaccountable movement, telegraphed again to Cincinnati: "Louisville is safe! God and Liberty."

Buell reached his objective, the city of Louisville, September 25th. He found there tens of thousands of troops, infantry and cavalry, many of them raw. Having spent five days in reorganizing his army, he marched out 100,000 strong in search of Bragg.³ Apprehending nothing from the Confederate commander who had discovered so little of the art of war, he marched in three columns, each column on a separate road. The column under Sill, which proceeded in the direction of Frankfort, where Smith with his army was in attendance upon the inauguration of Governor Hawes, threw shell into the town and dispersed the crowd.

The situation with the Confederates now became greatly confused and necessarily perilous. Bragg ordered Smith, with some 25,000 troops, the victors on the splendid field of Richmond a few weeks before, to march toward his army, under Polk. From Polk he detached the fine division of Alabama troops, 8000 strong, under Major-General Withers, to march to meet Sill at the small town of Salvisa, while Smith should come on from Frankfort and attack him in the rear. This plan proved utterly abortive. Sill passed Salvisa before Withers could reach it.

Bragg had left Polk in command at Bardstown. Polk hurried on to Hardee, at Perryville, twenty miles southeast, reaching there at midnight, October 7th. Coming from Frankfort, the commanding general stopped for the night about five miles from Perryville. Under these circumstances the army scattered, a part under Polk, a part under Hardee, a part under Withers, and a part under Smith, all separated by miles. Hardee wrote to General Bragg a plain, soldierly letter, under date of October 7th, 1862, from Perryville, in which he said: "Permit me, from the

³Century Leaders and Battles of the Civil War.

friendly relations so long existing between us, to write you plainly. Don't scatter your force. There is one rule in our profession which should never be forgotten, it is to throw the mass of your forces upon the fractions of the enemy.

Strike with your whole force, first to the right and then to the left."

Within the area of the armies of Buell, Smith and Bragg were the towns and villages of Hodgenville, Shepperds-ville, Lebanon, Taylorsville, Harrodsburg, Salvisa, Versailles, Lexington, Springfield, Perryville.

Colonel Wheeler's report shows the progress of the enemy on the 6th and 7th toward the field of Perryville (October 8th):

"The enemy came up in strong force, reaching the town (Springfield) about 8 A. M. the 6th. Our pickets having been driven in, we engaged them with artillery and small arms, compelling them to advance very slowly, frequently deploying their infantry. We were obliged to fall back slowly when their infantry fired too heavily, but succeeded in so checking their progress that they only advanced four miles from 8 A. M. until dark. They attempted several times to turn our flank, but were easily checked by our flankers. In this series of engagements the enemy suffered quite severely.

"The next morning we ambushed the command about six miles out from Perryville. The enemy came up in fine style to about two hundred yards, when they discovered our position. We then fired upon them with excellent effect, thoroughly stampeding their entire front. So effectual and unexpected was this stampede of so large a force of cavalry, artillery and a portion of their infantry, that our cavalry could not be placed in a position to charge them to accomplish all that could be desired. As it was, we succeeded in capturing one officer and eight men, together with fifty stand of superior arms, and a great number of blankets, saddle-bags, etc., which they had thrown away in their flight.

By keeping our lines continually skirmishing until night, we prevented the enemy from making any demonstrations that day (October

7th) upon our infantry, which had deployed in line of battle to meet them on the field of Perryville."

This all-day fighting of Colonel Wheeler on October 7th to prevent the approach of Buell upon Perryville was not only a most remarkable military achievement in itself, but the motive was most soldierly. Hardee was alone at Perryville on the 7th. Polk had not come. Had Buell reached that point in his expected time, he must not only have routed Hardee, but have cut Polk off from all hope of escape. Polk reached Perryville, from Bardstown, about midnight of the 7th and took command.

As soon as Colonel Wheeler had put his wearied troops into camp the evening of the 7th, he rode forward to Hardee's quarters and there gave that gallant officer some most valuable information and wholesome advice. Gilbert's corps of Buell's army, he said, was in camp within one mile of Perryville. McCook's corps was nine miles behind Gilbert. These two corps would unite and give battle in the forenoon. The colonel earnestly pleaded that the Confederate force, entire, should be hurled against Gilbert at dawn, before McCook could march the nine miles which separated the two. When McCook arrived he then would meet troops flushed with victory and he could be handled readily.

General Bragg, still five miles away at the farmhouse, ordered Polk to open the attack on Gilbert at dawn. The order was not obeyed. At dawn Polk held a conference of his ranking officers and it was agreed, unanimously, that the Confederates should await the assault of the enemy. Bragg waited until ten o'clock to hear the guns. He heard none. He mounted his horse and rode to the field to find the army in line of battle and the enemy forming rapidly on the front. He ordered Polk to open the fight. Waiting until twelve o'clock without obedience to his command, he in person led his army to the onset.⁴

The fighting through the whole afternoon was very desperate, 16,000 Confederates to 58,000 of their foes. The

⁴Bragg's Report, Off. War Records, vol. XVI, part 1, p. 1093.

Confederates occupied an elevation on one side of the town of Perryville and the enemy's position was on the opposite side, so the battle was fought over the roofs of the houses.

Bragg's report continues: "Our troops did not hesitate to engage at any odds, and though checked at times, they eventually carried every position and drove the enemy about two miles. But for the intervention of night, we should have completed the work. We had captured fifteen pieces of artillery by the most daring charges, killed and wounded two brigadier-generals and a very large number of inferior officers and men, estimated at no less than 4000, and captured 400 prisoners, including three staff officers with servants, carriage and baggage of Major-General McCook. The ground was literally strewn with his dead and wounded."

Before dawn the Confederates left the field of battle, which they had held all night, unmolested, moving off with a long train from one of the most desperate of their fruitless victories. About dusk one of the Confederate regiments, finding itself annoyed by a single gun of the enemy, rushed forward to seize it. By the time the regiment drew near all the men at the gun had fallen or fled except one. The solitary young volunteer lieutenant would not turn his back and neither would the advancing Confederates fire on him. Unharmed, he was captured. A few years later he came to Memphis as rector of an Episcopal church there. In the yellow fever scourge of 1878 he still remained at his post of duty, where he died. About the same moment of this interesting event, in the gloaming, General Polk, finding a part of his command suffering from the fire of a regiment of the enemy, rode boldly up to the commanding officer and ordered the fire to cease. The light was too dim to permit the officer to distinguish the uniform, but, impressed with the soldierly bearing of Polk, he obeyed the order. General Polk, in narrating the incident, declared that as he rode off, first slowly and then at full gallop, to return to his own lines, he felt the sting of bullets in his back!

By night march Smith, having heard of the battle of

Perryville and Bragg's retreat, reached Harrodsburg on the morning of the 10th and there found the commanding general. Smith sought his superior and the agreement was finally made that, with their united forces, about 60,000 strong, Buell should be forced to battle. Smith urged: "For God's sake, general, let us fight Buell here. I believe that without a command even, our men would run over Buell's army, composed as it is of more than half new levies." General Bragg's reply was: "I will do it, sir. Select your position, put your men in line of battle and I will counter-march my column."⁵

Smith occupied all the morning of the 10th forming a line of battle and found his men enthusiastic at the thought of the approaching struggle. In the afternoon he received an order from the general commanding him to fall back to Camp Dick Robinson.

We shall now return to the bloody day at Perryville in order to consider the part taken there by the cavalry. Colonel Wheeler was profoundly chagrined by the neglect of his counsel, given to General Hardee the evening before that day, to attack at dawn the lead of the advancing column. He was assigned, however, a very important part in the battle, and, as usual, we shall permit him to relate what he did in his own language, at once clear and modest:

"During the night I received orders to place my brigade on the left of our general line of battle for the engagement which was to take place on the following day. At daylight the skirmishing again commenced and at about eight o'clock my brigade was deployed as directed. Pickets and scouts were immediately thrown out on all the approaches to Perryville from the south and southwest as far as the Lebanon and Danville road and all precaution taken to prevent a flank movement of the enemy.

"Seeing myself confronted by a large body of troops of all arms, deployed in line of battle and gradually increasing their front, my line was advanced to hold them in check sufficiently to prevent their farther advance.

"About 10 A. M. my pickets on the Perryville and

⁵General Kirby Smith, p. 219.

Lebanon road were pressed in by a large body of cavalry, which proved to be the 1st Kentucky and 7th Pennsylvania regiments, which were moving down the Perryville and Lebanon road with a large force, partly dismounted, deployed on each side. At this moment, receiving orders from General Polk to clear that road of the enemy, we charged, throwing their entire force of cavalry into confusion and putting it to flight.

"We pursued them at full charge for two miles, capturing many prisoners and horses in single combat and driving the remainder under cover of their masses of infantry. The enemy also fled, terror-stricken, from a battery placed in advance of their general line and left it at our disposal. The charge, one of the most brilliant of the campaign, was made in column; detachments of the 1st and 3d Alabama cavalry, Colonels W W Allen and James Hagan, being in advance. Colonel Hart, who had just come up with a body of 400 cavalry, followed for a short distance, but owing to some mistake turned off the road, carrying all of his own command, together with all in his rear, thus leaving the combat to the few brave men in the 1st and 3d Alabama regiments. With these few—after sending our prisoners to the rear we numbered only about eighty men—we were confronted with such forces that we were prevented from making any farther advance, I therefore withdrew a short distance and again deployed our line, engaging the enemy with both cavalry and artillery until night, and prevented this large force from taking any other part in the contest of that day."

Superior officers in rank, engaged on the field of battle, were wont to refer to Colonel Wheeler's work on the wing of the Confederate army at Perryville with strongest words of encomium.

Four days after the battle of Perryville the commanding general ordered the adjutant general of the army, Colonel George W Brent, to write to Colonel Wheeler a congratulatory letter, in which occurred this paragraph: "No cavalry force was ever more handsomely handled and no

army better covered. You have the general's most cordial thanks and congratulations."

Colonel Wheeler had informed the commanding general of Buell's movement to flank him on the west. Preparations were at once made to retreat. The decision was crude and a great disappointment to the troops. Smith had joined the main column and was in line of battle when he received the order. The following order was a part of the preparations for retreat:

"HEADQUARTERS DEPARTMENT NO. 2,
"Bryantville, Ky., Oct. 13, 1862.

"Special Orders:—

"No. 14.

"1. Colonel Joseph Wheeler is hereby appointed chief of cavalry and is authorized to give orders in the name of the commanding general. He is charged, under Major-General Smith, with covering the rear of the army and holding the enemy in check. All cavalry will report to him and receive his orders."

Kentucky was lost. Humphrey Marshall returned to West Virginia. Bragg took command of his own, "the Army of the Mississippi," and of Smith's, "the Army of Kentucky," and turned his face southward, dependent upon Wheeler's sagacity and energy for a safe return whence he had set out.

Before mounting his horse to follow his retreating armies, General Bragg wrote to Adjutant-General Cooper as follows:

"The campaign here was predicated on the belief, and the most positive assurance, that the people of this country would rise in mass to assert their independence. No people ever had so favorable opportunity but, I am distressed to add, there is little or no disposition to avail of it. Willing, perhaps, to accept their independence, they are neither disposed nor willing to risk their lives or their property in the achievement. With ample means to arm 20,000

men⁶ and a force, with that, fully to redeem the state, we have not issued half the arms left us by casualties incident to the campaign."

General Bragg made no secret of his sore heart. For every two that went to Lincoln, one came to the Confederacy. The Breckinridge family was divided, some members in one and some in the other army, but the most influential came south. Buell was a native of Kentucky and so was Major Robert Anderson, who defended Fort Sumter. The masses of middle and western Kentucky, of Virginian stock, were intensely southern, but not dependent upon negro labor, as in the cotton states. The Clay family was divided.

General Bragg's two armies moved together in retreat as far as Lancaster. There the road forked. The Army of the Mississippi took the way through Crab Orchard and the commanding general rode with it. The Army of Kentucky took the way over Big Hill, under General Smith. Buell was in pursuit, and the duty of Colonel Wheeler, chief of the cavalry, was to protect the rear of both armies. The roads came together again at Barboursville, north of Cumberland Gap, the objective point of the retreat.

The country most of the way was rough and thinly settled. The farms were small and the crops meagre. At that season water was only to be found at long distances. A veteran declared many years later that the suffering he remembered most vividly in all his war experiences was on Bragg's retreat from Kentucky. General Smith carried with him several thousand wagons, well laden, which he had captured at Richmond and in the blue-grass region. General Bragg had also a long train.

To the young chief of cavalry the safety of the retreating host on each road was entrusted. To Wheeler, General Smith wrote: "Hold the enemy in check, for the safety of this command depends on it." To General Bragg Smith

⁶The Confederate general carried along with him small arms captured at Munfordville, and otherwise provided arms for the volunteer Kentuckians he expected to rally to his standard.

also wrote: "My command, for want of sleep five nights, is completely exhausted. The straggling has been unusually great. I have no hope of saving the whole of my train, as I shall be obliged to double-team up Big Hill and will be necessarily delayed there two or three days." General Bragg communicated General Smith's news to Colonel Wheeler. The ardent young cavalryman had been fighting day and night. From road to road, from army to army, he rode. "Tell General Smith," was his reply, "to abandon nothing; we will save all." Morgan, Scott, Wharton were there full of ardor and battle.

It should have been mentioned that the day after the battle of Perryville the 8th Confederate Cavalry, Colonel W. B. Wade, joined Wheeler. This was one of the best of his regiments. Its colonel was a veteran soldier. Wheeler was no little irritated by what he considered the unnecessary delay of Colonel Wade in reaching him from Tennessee. He had, in fact, come from northern Mississippi, for this was one of the regiments that participated in Wheeler's maiden raid in west Tennessee already described. A captain of the 8th Confederate cavalry in private correspondence from the field, gave this account:

"On Sunday evening, before General Bragg began his movement of retreat from Bryantsville, about dark, an order came to Colonel Wade to detail 200 men to report to General Bragg with all dispatch. Companies A and B were placed under me, as senior captain, to fill the requisition. We marched and reported to General Bragg's headquarters at Bryantsville about 9 o'clock P. M. The general instructed me to report to his chief commissary at Camp Dick Robinson, where I would receive further orders. By the commissary I was instructed to march down the pike in the direction of Lancaster, four miles, where I would find a man in charge of 1000 head of cattle. I could see, at Bryantsville, acres of barrels of pork lying on the ground to be abandoned. I was to drive the herd with all dispatch toward Cumberland Gap, and was further instructed that at a designated point on the way I would meet some 800

other animals of this description, which I must take into my care for the same purpose.

"Thus I found my command acting the 'cow-boy' rôle, with some 2000 fat blue-grass beeves, averaging perhaps one thousand pounds the head. The season was dry. The fat cattle could not travel fast and some soon proved they could travel no farther. To make matters worse, the second day out we were overtaken by General Kirby Smith's wagon train. This was the finest wagon train the Confederacy had—about 4000 wagons, all branded 'U. S.,' denoting the capture from 'Bull' Nelson at Richmond, besides pickings in that line from other places in middle Kentucky. On the third and fourth day the infantry came up to add to the confusion of the road. There was nothing but dead leaves in the woods, and an occasional patch of dead corn-stalks for the cattle to feed on. The infantry found beef enough in the cattle that dropped out of the march. I don't know how the army existed as it marched. I had a few barrels of pork in my wagons and sent a squad out that got a hand corn-mill that gave us a fair supply of meal."

The orders issued to the chief of cavalry for the march were imperative and stringent, in General Bragg's peculiar vein: "You are specially required to collect all stragglers, and those sick and disabled, and to mount them, if possible, and bring them on." The injunction to duty was difficult, under the extraordinary circumstances. General Bragg passed on ahead of either column. He was not less anxious than Smith, on the Big Hill road. He wrote to Polk from London:

"In view of the information from General Smith, it is necessary for us to hold the enemy in check on this route until he (Smith) can advance, so as to avoid being headed off by them. You must, therefore, make such disposition at Big or Little Rockcastle river as will accomplish this, and we must rely on beef for subsistence. Wheeler's report represents the enemy as still on the advance, and in heavy force. I trust Smith is not as hard pressed as he supposes. If he is, there is no hope but to sacrifice his train. Please

direct the commander of your rear to open and read all dispatches from Wheeler, so as to be well posted and ready to act. The bridge over Little Rockcastle should be destroyed when Wheeler crosses. As soon as convenient, I desire to see General Hardee and yourself, leaving your staff officers to carry out your dispositions. All trains must be urged forward. Had not Cheatham better stop at Little Rockcastle and send for his provisions?"⁷

It is evident from the correspondence of the commanding general of both the Army of the Mississippi on the Crab Orchard road and the Army of Kentucky on the Big Hill road, that there was a sole reliance upon Wheeler for escape from the powerful foe in the rear.

The infantry available to General Buell comprised the troops he had made battle with at Perryville and such reinforcement as he might call for, ready at Cincinnati and Louisville or from Grant, at Corinth. Grant did actually send 10,000 men to him at Bowling Green. The cavalry under General Buell consisted of 1200 to 1500 seasoned troops that had come from Nashville with him, and 1500 to 2000 Kentuckians that he found at Louisville, making a cavalry force, say, 3000 strong.⁸ It is perhaps the most interesting incident of this remarkable campaign, that, while the enemy's cavalry led their pursuing army for two or three days at the outset, the commanding general then discovered the inefficiency of that arm of his forces to cope with the Confederate cavalry, and thereafter he reversed its place in his column.⁹ Bragg mentions his "two small brigades of cavalry at Perryville—Wheeler's and Forrest's turned over to Wharton. Smith mentions Scott's cavalry, 900 strong, that set out with him from Knoxville, and the one regiment under John H. Morgan, already in Kentucky, raiding. A liberal estimate of cavalry under Wheeler would not raise the force above the 3000 that Buell had of that arm. What credit should be allowed the Confederate cavalry in the logistics of the situation for the task of finding

⁷Official War Records, sec. 1, vol. XVI, pp. 11, 951.

⁸Buell's letter, Leonidas Polk, vol. II, p. 162.

⁹Wheeler's Report.

out whether the pursuing horse would overtake Bragg on the Crab Orchard road or Smith on the Big Hill road? It is certain that the two retreating Confederate armies pursued separate roads, miles apart, for seven days, from October 13th to October 19th, inclusive; that neither was seriously impeded in its slow progress by the pursuing enemy, and that their freedom from molestation was attributed by both commanders to the marvelous energy, skill and devotion of Colonel Wheeler.

A phenomenal fact in the conditions is that, in the whole seven days and nights of Wheeler's protectorate, not an infantry man was summoned from line to assist him. Infantry and artillery alike, of the main army, took no heed of the operations of the cavalry behind them, but were concerned only in their own unmolested progress until the afternoon of the 19th, the day of the reuniting of Smith and Bragg, when a fragment of Frazier's regiment of infantry reported to Colonel Wheeler and supported him for a few hours in the actions then taking place.

Colonel Wheeler won the confidence and admiration of the whole force under him, officers and common soldiers alike, by his wonderful personal activity. Day and night he seemed to be sleepless. Recklessly exposing himself in battle, tirelessly watchful of his lines, always spending a large part of the night studying, in the saddle, the ground he was to contest the next day, his men and the commanders above him learned to trust implicitly every movement made by his order. Major-General Smith was especially indebted to him for the successful retreat of his army. The following letter is expressive of the feeling of the superior officer:

"HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF KENTUCKY,

"Oct. 20, 1862. 6 P M.

"Colonel: The general wishes me to express to you his appreciation of the thorough manner in which you have performed your important duties during this retreat, and to say he will take special pleasure in bringing your services to the notice of the department at Richmond. He wishes you to take some strong position on the Barboursville road,

where you can still hold the enemy in check until the stragglers can all come up. There are many of them still in the rear. Colonel Taylor's brigade (infantry) is still ten miles from here, on the old State road. Colonel Wharton is on the same road in the rear. Make your reports frequently to this point."

(Signed) "JOHN PEGRAM,
"Colonel and A. A. Gen'l."

The day before, in a postscript to an official order, the adjutant general of the whole army, George W. Brent, wrote, "I congratulate you, my dear fellow, upon the success with which you have conducted operations in our rear," and the same day General Bragg wrote: "Your dispatch of 9 P. M. of the 18th is just received. It is particularly gratifying and supports the reputation you have already won for high soldierly qualities."

Arrived at Cumberland Gap, the chief of cavalry properly considered that the troops under him should receive some formal acknowledgment of efficiency in their arduous labors of the preceding months. The *esprit de corps* required it. Thus he prepared and published, at the head of each regiment, the following spirited order:

"HEADQUARTERS CAVALRY,
"Cumberland Gap, Oct. 23, 1862.

"General Orders:—

"No. 3.

"Soldiers of the Cavalry: Army of Mississippi:

"The campaign in Kentucky is over. Your arduous duties as the advance and rear guard of the vast army are finished. Your gallantry in action, your cheerful endurance and suffering from hunger, fatigue and exposure render you worthy of all commendation. For nearly two months you have scarcely been for a moment without the range of the enemy's musketry. In more than twenty pitched fights, many of which lasted throughout the day, you have successfully combated largely superior numbers of the enemy's troops of all arms. Hovering continually near the enemy,

you have engaged in no less than one hundred skirmishes. Upon the memorable field of Perryville, alone and unsupported, you engaged and held in check during the entire action at least two infantry divisions of the opposing army. By your gallant charges on that day you completely dispersed and routed a vastly superior force of the enemy's cavalry, driving them in confusion under their artillery and infantry supports, capturing in hand-to-hand conflicts many prisoners, horses, arms, etc. Your continuous contact with the enemy has taught you to repose without fear under his guns, to fight him wherever found, and quietly to make your bivouac under the light of his campfires. On this continued series of combats and brilliant charges many gallant officers and brave men have fallen. We mourn their loss. We commend their valor. Let us emulate their soldierly virtues."

General Buell lost the confidence of his government and his command as the result of Bragg's successful retreat. A court of inquiry convened on his case. Wheeler, to whom Bragg's success in the movement was due, gained the confidence of his government and the whole country. No use of cavalry was ever more conspicuous to effect the safety of an army than in this case. The difficulties which environed the Confederate commanding general are so clearly expressed in a letter written on the spot in his own hand to his next in rank, Polk, that it is reproduced in full.

The cavalry had to protect the infantry, dispersed by divisions and brigades in search of water:

"LONDON, 1 P. M., 15th.

"My dear General:

"The ordnance train has only just gotten through here. I am now hurrying provisions to Big Laurel, six miles from here, where Hardee is obliged to camp to-morrow night for water. He will get his provisions there. Cheatham must stop at Pittman's Springs. It is the only water and scarce at that. Provisions will be there for him. The head of Smith's train reached that junction as I passed to-day. The union (of the two armies) will embarrass us

much, but we must make the best of it. From Crab Orchard and Mount Vernon a road leaves south of the one we moved on, comes into it one mile and a half from here, crossing Rock Castle river near the mouth of the line creek. I send a picket there to-night. Wheeler ought to be notified so as to watch it. Will you please send to him. If you have anything from him, let me hear.

“Yours truly,

“BRAXTON BRAGG.

“Major-General Polk Commanding.”

The letter itself was sent by Polk to Wheeler.

Buell gave up pursuit at London, turning off at right angles on his way to Nashville to anticipate Bragg. Finding the enemy gone from his heels, Bragg turned the army over to Polk, rode across the hills and took the railroad for Richmond, to explain to the president, always his friend, why he came back from Kentucky. He claimed that he had brought out mules, beeves, and other valuable things to recompense the country for his losses. He asked the president to give him a brigadier's commission for Colonel Wheeler. The president hesitated. A man barely twenty-five years of age was too young to place in command of the cavalry of a great army. “Is not my chief of staff entitled to a brigadier's rank?” asked Bragg. “Yes,” replied the president. “Then, I nominate Joseph Wheeler.” The general returned with the commission.

When Bragg returned, the president sent for Polk. The country was profoundly stirred at the mishap of the army and the anxiety of the president reflected it.

Bragg left Buell behind, at Nashville, by a skillful movement into Kentucky. After finding that the latter was following him on a parallel line of march, striving to reach Louisville first, Bragg stopped and turned aside to capture the unimportant garrison of Munfordville. Then Buell proceeded, unmolested, to the common objective point. While the two main armies were marching thus, Kirby Smith moved forward from his splendid victory at Richmond into the heart of the blue-grass region. At Lexing-

ton he was only some forty miles from Bragg, the ranking commander with power to unite and command both armies. Buell recruited his army, raising it to about 100,000¹⁰ and marched forth to meet Bragg. Not only was Smith retained at a distance from the main army, where he did nothing; but Withers' division, some 8000 strong, was started off to join Smith. Buell caught Bragg at Perryville, with the Confederate forces separated in three parts; Smith at Lexington, with 25,000, Withers, with 8000, on the road out of reach of either army, and Polk, with 14,000, at Perryville. The battle came off at Perryville, October 8th. As usual, the Confederates won the fight, slept on the field—and abandoned it next day. Bragg turned his face southward and nothing but the genius and valor of Joseph Wheeler saved his army from capitulation or dispersion.

When General Buell reached Nashville he was relieved and General W. S. Rosecrans was called from Corinth, Mississippi, to supersede him.

¹⁰Wheeler, in *Century Magazine*.

CHAPTER VI

1862

THE MURFREESBORO CAMPAIGN

The army rested at Knoxville, and there General Bragg, having returned from his visit to the president still safe in the confidence of the commander in chief, issued an animated address to the troops. The good things done by the invasion of Kentucky, he assured them, outweighed the disappointments.

Rosecrans was at Nashville, fortifying and also preparing to start for Atlanta. Grant was at Memphis, where Van Dorn had forced him, preparing to reach Vicksburg by the water route. In Virginia, McClellan and Burnside were preparing to reach Richmond by way of Fredericksburg.

General Bragg ordered the Army of the Mississippi and a part of the forces of General Smith to break camp for middle Tennessee to confront Rosecrans. This was the beginning of the campaign that terminated at Greensboro, North Carolina, April 26th, 1865, two years and five months later, by the same active armies. In the same week that Bragg moved to meet Rosecrans at Nashville Lee moved to meet Burnside at Fredericksburg. Both Confederate armies, worn out by the casualties of the field, but never disbanded, were surrendered in the same month of the same year to an enemy who had drawn indispensable support from all western Europe, and indispensable support, as well, from the states of the Confederacy, in a number of men, white and black, equal to the total strength of the Confederate armies from first to last of the conflict.

Breckinridge, with his fine division of fresh troops, was sent by railroad to Murfreesboro in the latter part of October. Forrest was already there with his newly organized

brigade of cavalry, not half armed. John H. Morgan had returned with his brigade from Kentucky to the same vicinage. General Rosecrans by November 12th certainly had a greatly superior force at Nashville, and the question, why did he fail to move out on the fine pike to capture Breckinridge or disperse him? is yet unanswered.

As Breckinridge moved by rail, Wheeler set out to march over the Cumberland mountains to report to him in the beautiful valley, where abundance for his men and horses to live on would be found. Wheeler escorted the army trains and arrived the latter part of November. Close following came the infantry and artillery, by rail, the general commanding making Murfreesboro his headquarters. His divisions were then spread out for a distance of forty miles, north to south, on either side of the village.

Among early orders from headquarters was that designating Brigadier-General Joseph Wheeler as chief of cavalry. The order seems to have come as a surprise to the young soldier. Forrest, as we have seen, had been promoted brigadier for distinguished service three months before. Morgan, recently, had been promoted brigadier for like reason. Forrest was fifteen years and Morgan eleven years older than Wheeler. Wheeler was small in stature, while each of the others was full six feet in height and bore himself in a most martial manner, especially when mounted. It was understood among his subordinates that Wheeler was reluctant to accept his assignment over them.¹ The general commanding, however, had discovered in Wheeler certain high qualities for the position to which he was assigned not possessed by the other cavalry commanders. Wheeler was an educated soldier, and because of the mental discipline of education, more appreciative of the relation which the chief of cavalry in an army, in the field, must bear to that army. "He was just, high-toned, exceedingly courteous and as brave as a Paladin: he was full of fire and enterprise and battle seemed his natural element." The cavalry under Wheeler was to be the fixed eyes and ears of the army. Its commander was expected to under-

¹Morgan's Cavalry.

stand the orders of the general of the army and to accept them as the limit of his duty. His great comrades possessed, perhaps, more originality in strategy than he, but for the protection of the army on outposts by the steadiness and alertness of a large body of mounted men, they inspired not so great confidence in the commanding general as he.

General Rosecrans was a little younger than General Bragg, but both were in the prime of life. Both had resigned from the "old" army, for which they were educated at West Point, several years before the war to engage in civil pursuits. Both, therefore, had become volunteers from patriotic motives. Rosecrans had adopted the profession of consulting engineer and lived in Ohio, his native state. Bragg, as we have seen, became a Louisiana planter and a master of slaves. He had the reputation of being an extraordinary manager of the plantation. Rosecrans was a devout Catholic, while Bragg was of the Protestant Episcopal Church.

The fertile and beautiful agricultural valley at the foot of the Cumberland range, between Nashville and Murfreesboro, now became the arena of the utmost extremities of war. General Bragg awaited the advance of General Rosecrans and General Rosecrans delayed his movements for two reasons—that he might receive reinforcements and that he might make his start for Atlanta simultaneously with Grant's start down the Mississippi for Vicksburg, thence overland to Montgomery and Mobile. Meantime, the cavalry from both armies scoured the valley. The invader had little confidence in his mounted men; the defender had boundless confidence in his. Rosecrans would habitually send out large bodies of his cavalry, informing them that infantry support would follow, thus seeking to encourage them and harden them to the service. The numerous pikes that covered the valley were lined with prosperous farms and happy homes. On both sides of the Cumberland river the population was intensely sympathetic with the Confederacy and its soldiers. This sentiment was especially pronounced with the wives and daughters of the farmers. Along the highways, night and day, scouts from both armies

rode and foraging trains, under guards, night and day called at the barns and smoke-houses for supplies. General Stanley, chief of cavalry of the invading army, published peremptory orders that every home from which husband, son or brother had entered the Confederate army should be burned, and every home of "near kinsmen" of volunteers in the Confederate army should also receive the torch.² Private residences in which Wheeler's scouts and pickets were found, or to which they had been known to resort, were burned.

Upon the minds and hearts of the women of the valley this barbarous order acted like a match to the magazine. Miss Antoinette Polk had gone alone, on horseback, to spend the afternoon at a neighbor's. She left at home several of Wheeler's men, who were entertained as guests. During her visit, seeing a small body of the enemy's cavalry approaching her friend's home, she instantly sprang into her saddle and, turning her course across the fields, dashed toward her own home, to give warning. In vain did the foe pursue her. General Bragg sent "Lieutenant Buford," promoted from the ranks for distinguished gallantry at Shiloh, to General Stewart of the infantry for instructions upon a scout. Stewart then first discovered the lieutenant to be a young woman.

A Confederate officer, whose home was in this valley, wrote of his neighbors, the farmers' young daughters: "They would go into Nashville, get the information they desired, get drawings of field-works and other data, return and deposit their reports in writing in some designated stump or other place to be received by our special scouts."³ The heroic scout, Sam Davis, captured with notes and drawings concealed on his person, was earnestly solicited by General Dodge, of the enemy, to reveal the name of the officer from whom he had received them. The penalty of persistent secrecy was death, while life and liberty would be the reward of betrayal. Davis indignantly refused to

²Off. War Records, Series I, vol. XXIII., Pt. 2, p. 240.

³Ridley's Diary.

betray his associates and died on the gallows. Did he receive his papers from a woman?

Van Dorn was fighting desperately on the left of Bragg's line, at Thompson's Station. Colonel Earle's regiment charged into Mr. Thompson's back yard. Mr. Thompson's daughter, seventeen years of age, looked on at first, and then, yielding to high impulses, rushed among the troops, seized the colors and shouted to them, "Follow me!"

All farmers of the valley, however, were not of one mind toward the Confederacy. Some were true disciples of Governor Andrew Johnson and Parson Brownlow. Among this class were Maxwell, Miller and Patton. Larkin Gunter, a neighbor of the three, was a devoted Confederate. With Gunter, a widower, lived his daughter, Marina, in budding womanhood. The three Unionists entered into a conspiracy for a desperate revenge. They knocked at the door of Gunter's cottage in the darkness of early night and when he opened it the three seized him and by main force dragged him to the nearby wood-pile. Having stretched him on a log at full length, two held him firmly while the third beat him mercilessly. The young daughter from the house heard her father's cries. Crazed by distress, she cunningly slipped upon the scene. The ax just laid down by her father caught her glance. Seizing it unnoticed by the assailants, she cleft the skulls of two, and striking at the third with all her might as he fled, broke his arm, from the effects of which wound he died.

Clarksville, Nashville and Hartsville, in the order here named, lay on the Cumberland river, from west—or down stream—to east. They may be described as forming the northern side of a triangle, within which the two rival armies lay in camp and daily sent out scouts and foragers. Within the triangle were the villages, Lebanon, La Vergne, Murfreesboro, Old Jefferson, Brentwood, Nolensville, Flat-rock and Franklin. "The Hermitage" was within also. When the army arrived, late in November, Forrest operated on the southern side, principally about Franklin, Wheeler in the middle and Morgan on the northern side.

The operations of the cavalry of both armies, scouting and foraging, became extremely costly to the farmers. On November 21st Lieutenant-Colonel David McKee, out from the enemy at Nashville, made an excursion with cavalry down the river toward Clarksville. He captured "47 prisoners, 18 horses, 20 mules, 3 wagons and 100 small arms." The "prisoners" were farmers, found at home; the spoils of war were plow animals and farm property. The lieutenant-colonel further reported: "I caused to be destroyed by fire one distillery and two dwelling houses, and the out-buildings connected therewith, which were notoriously used as refuges for guerrilla parties."⁴ The "guerrilla" parties were Confederate scouts, in uniform and bearing orders. Wheeler's activity brought from the general commanding the following letter, most grateful to the ambitious young soldier:

"MURFREESBOROUGH, Nov 27, 1862.

"General Wheeler, Chief of Cavalry:

"General: The general commanding directs me to thank you for your successful engagement with the enemy to-day. He desires also that you will express to the 1st Alabama regiment his appreciation of their gallant conduct, not unexpected, which you refer to in your report. He further directs me to say you expose yourself too recklessly in affairs of this character.

"GEORGE W BRENT,
"Adjutant."

"Affairs," small or great, ever brought Wheeler to the front. In the present instance, a shell from the enemy had exploded under his horse, tearing the animal to pieces, and to this incident the general had reference. The rider was bruised in the fall, but quickly remounted to resume his position in the lead.

Saturday morning, December 6th, Brigadier-General John H. Morgan rode out from his camp near Murfreesboro at the head of 1400 men of his own command, with two regiments of Kentucky infantry and four or five pieces

⁴Off. War Records.

of artillery, bound for the enemy's post at Hartsville. He marched the sixty miles to the Cumberland river by midnight the next day, the 7th. The crossing of the infantry by ferry was slow and perilous on account of leaky flat-boats. The cavalry of the expedition, which expected to ford the river at a certain point, finding the water had risen too high, were compelled to ford higher up. The weather was bitterly cold. When the so-called ford was reached, each horse had to jump four feet into the stream from the bank above, thus giving every rider a thorough wetting. The attack was made at dawn. The surprise of the foe was complete. General George H. Thomas, with a considerable force, was at Gallatin, perilously near. Morgan hastened back, carrying 1800 prisoners and sixteen wagons loaded with captured arms. Besides these, his men exchanged their old muzzle-loaders of the Austrian make for new Springfield rifles found in the camp.

The news carried distress to President Lincoln. Ever alert to the military conditions, and with a native talent for war, he in this case of humiliation promptly called for an explanation. His loss in property and prisoners had been heavy, while of the attacking party only 125 men had been killed and wounded. The president received answer from General Rosecrans: No cavalry videttes were out from the camp; no pickets were out; no camp guards were posted. The Confederates formed their cavalry within four hundred yards of the camp and no shot was fired on them. The artillery did nothing. The infantry stood at or near their arms while the Confederate cavalry dismounted, in full view, and advanced to within one hundred yards of the camp before a shot was fired on them.⁵

On the day that Morgan began his march Wheeler moved out toward Nashville, supported by Cheatham's division of infantry. This was done to divert attention from Morgan. Wheeler captured fourteen foraging wagons and their guard of twenty-seven men.

Department No. 2 was created, with headquarters at

⁵Off. War Records.

Chattanooga, General Joseph E. Johnston in command. This new department embraced all the territory and the forces between the Mississippi and the Chattahooche to the Gulf.

General Johnston arrived soon after Bragg reached Murfreesboro and visited that army. He gave it the appropriate name, "Army of Tennessee." The new commander was not pleased with the disposition of the troops. He foresaw that the attempt to hold both Tennessee and Mississippi would end in the loss of both. The enemy had fixed upon west Tennessee, the rich agricultural region lying between the Mississippi, running due south, and the Tennessee, running north, as a base of supplies and posts for reinforcement to both Grant and Rosecrans. On December 17th General Forrest, at Columbia, with some 2700 men—most of them fresh recruits—was ordered to cross the Tennessee, break up the posts and destroy the depots. He protested that he had no arms for such an enterprise. He was allowed to carry the four field-guns he had captured at Murfreesboro in July. Four hundred of his men had flintlock, muzzle-loading rifles, some no arms. Hundreds had only farm saddles and bridles.

Morgan, with about 2000 men, but better armed, by his captures, was ordered on December 22d, to go into Kentucky and break up the Louisville and Nashville railroad and the depots of supplies found there.

While Johnston, at Murfreesboro, made these preparations to delay both Rosecrans and Grant, President Davis arrived at Chattanooga and sent for him. After conferring with the general, the president went alone to Bragg's headquarters. Returning after a few days, he ordered Johnston to send Stevenson's division, 10,000 men, by rail to Mississippi. Johnston did not report the order and the president issued it himself.⁶ The general insisted that to attempt to hold both Mississippi and Tennessee would result in the loss of both.

The president made known his purpose to go on to Mississippi at once, and requested General Johnston to accom-

⁶Johnston's Narratives.

pany him thither. Thus the general of the new department was practically removed from command. Until December, twelve months later, he had no command worthy of the name, and the fortunes of the Confederacy drifted, deprived of the help of a strategist, without a superior.

When the president and the general reached Jackson, Mississippi, news was brought thither of the success of Van Dorn at Holly Springs to the north, where with 3500 cavalry he had beaten off the guard and destroyed the enormous stores of the enemy. So certain was Grant that his rear was safe, that he had left Mrs. Grant and her children at the town. She sent for the Confederate commander, who provided protection for her. Grant turned back to Memphis, because of Van Dorn's work upon his rear.

To coöperate with the original campaign planned by Grant, General Sherman had set out on boats from Memphis with an army well equipped. He landed and was met by Brigadier-General Stephen D. Lee a few miles north of Vicksburg on December 28th and defeated after desperate fighting. He too returned to Memphis, his appointed task undone.

General Rosecrans heard of the departure by rail of the last brigade of Stevenson's division from Chattanooga, on Christmas day. The next day, December 26th, General Wheeler reported to General Bragg the movement of the whole of Rosecrans' army out from Nashville and from Franklin, on three pikes which converged in the vicinity of Murfreesboro. "How long can you hold them on the road?" asked the commanding general. "About four days, general," was the quick reply. Polk and Hardee were present. "They will run right over you!" exclaimed Hardee.

General Bragg immediately called to his scattered divisions to form a line on and across Stone's River, a narrow stream some three miles out toward Nashville, from Murfreesboro.

General Smith remained at Knoxville to protect Bragg's rear from that direction. Stone's River was dry in drouth, but unfordable in floodtime.

The Army of Tennessee, ready for battle, was composed

of: Polk's corps, 13,047; Hardee's corps, 14,069; McCown's division, 4414; John K. Jackson's brigade, 874; cavalry, 4237,—total, 36,641.⁷

Rosecrans army stood as follows: 14th army corps, 27,725; 20th army corps, 13,031; 21st army corps, 13,061; cavalry, 4295, total, 58,112.⁸

Forrest was now doing phenomenal work in west Tennessee and Morgan in Kentucky, as we have seen. Wheeler's subordinates were General John A. Wharton, General Buford and General Pegram. Buford's and Pegram's brigades, so called, were not larger, in either case, than a small regiment.

General Rosecrans reported his cavalry, in the Murfreesboro campaign, so inferior in numbers to Bragg's that he could not send them "outside the infantry lines." Army returns, however, just quoted, show he had fifty-eight men more in that service than his opponent. At that stage of the war the Confederate cavalry had not armed and equipped itself by captures. The relative preparation of the hostile forces was, therefore, greatly in favor of the invader.

We approach the mighty struggle of the battlefield. We come face to face with the science of war in one of its extremest tests. There were no surprises laid, here or there. For more than a month each commander had planned for this day. Thousands upon thousands of corpses were to strew the fields and the cedar thickets. More thousands were to be hauled away mutilated, to be cared for by fond hands or left uncared for in strange places. All this was planned. The hour hastened.

We find General Wheeler ready for his second great opportunity as chief of cavalry. His preparations were exhaustive. He seemed never to sleep. His line was stretched from a point east of Stone's River, crossing the Murfreesboro and Nashville pike, ten miles east of Nashville and on to Brentwood, many miles. The line of videttes was continuous on his front. The picket-posts and grand

⁷Off. War Records.

⁸Off. War Records.

guards were at intervals to the rear of the vidette line at favorable positions from three hundred to one thousand yards behind. He was ready.

On Friday morning, December 26th, about daybreak General Wheeler rode to the front and found the enemy advancing on the Nashville pike in force, General Thomas L. Crittenden in command. He reported the fact immediately to General Bragg. With Cheatham's division of infantry in support, the skirmishing and fighting began promptly and continued all day, the enemy being unable to make more than three miles progress that day.

Wheeler's plan of action now developed and was seen to be most effective. He struck the head of the enemy's column, halted it, forced it to form line of battle, then, galloping away, attacked its flank and rear. He dismounted by company, or by regiment, to fight, or fought mounted. Military men to this day ask, Where were Stanley and his cavalry? They did not seriously enter the campaign in these latter days.

The long line of cavalry front under Wheeler had two subordinate commanders, General Pegram on the right and General Wharton on the left, both young men. Wheeler remained on the right in person. The brigade under him was composed of the 1st Alabama, Colonel W. W. Allen; the 3d Alabama, Colonel Hagan, now under Major F. Y. Gaines; the 51st Alabama, Colonel John Tyler Morgan;* the 8th Confederate, Colonel B. F. Wade (Alabama and Mississippi troops); two battalions of Tennesseans, under Majors D. W. Holman and De Witt C. Douglass. There was one battery, that of Captain J. H. Wiggins.

Wharton's brigade consisted of Texas troops, among them Terry's original Texas Rangers. Terry was killed, under General A. S. Johnston, in Kentucky and Wharton succeeded him. Besides these, there was a Georgia regiment under Colonel Harrison, a regiment under Colonel Cox, and Davis's and Malone's battalions. Wharton also had one battery.

Both wings of the Confederate cavalry were active at

*U. S. Senator, 1877-1907.

the start of Rosecrans out from Nashville and Franklin. Wharton struck the head of Thomas's advancing column on Saturday, December 27th, at Triune, supported by Wood's Alabama brigade of infantry. He fought all day, delaying the enemy's right. On Sunday Wharton and Wood withdrew, on orders, to the line of battle Bragg had then formed on Stone's River. The incidents on this, the left wing of the Confederate cavalry, were also highly interesting. Wharton reported to Lieutenant-General Polk on Christmas that the enemy, preparing to move on Murfreesboro, had that day driven him out of Franklin and burned the mill there. They sent out a large party foraging, near Nolensville. The country was rough and cavalry could not be used. The report said: "With what cavalry could be used without disturbing the pickets, we engaged the enemy. The country is very hilly and covered with cedar brakes, which renders it totally unfit for cavalry, and the infantry here has orders to risk nothing. I had three men wounded; killed six of the enemy and wounded fourteen. They thus paid for their forage. I intend to write to General Wheeler and ask him to come over and see for himself the amount of labor I have to perform."

We left General Wheeler at the close of the first day, December 26th, fronting the invader's left wing, advancing on the Murfreesboro and Nashville pike, and showing that he had held Crittenden to only three miles of progress on a perfect road. The same tactics were adopted on the three succeeding days with corresponding results. Cheatham's infantry, however, withdrew to form line of battle on the right of the army on the 27th, and thereafter in the campaign the cavalry had no infantry support.

In the gloaming of the spent day, December 29th, General Wheeler led his weary troopers behind the right wing of General Bragg, drawn up for battle. He had been true to his promise to hold Rosecrans back four days. As the rear of his column of horsemen, marching by fours, passed behind the line of battle, a shell from the enemy's battery killed one of them. The young general, leaving his men to feed their horses and cook their suppers, rode on

to report to General Bragg. He found a group, mounted, on the roadside, the commanding general, the two lieutenants-general, Polk and Hardee, splendid specimens of physical manhood in beautiful array of war. Each lifted his hat in honor of the cavalryman approaching, who blushed deeply. The hour of battle had come.

The reader interested in the science of war and even in the art of organizing large bodies of men for any sphere of activity, may find in the following "Memoranda for General and Staff Officers," issued by General Bragg on Sunday, December 28th, much to reflect upon:

"1. The line of battle will be in front of Murfreesborough; half of the army, left wing, in front of Stone's River; right wing in rear of the river.

"2. Polk's corps will form the left wing; Hardee's, the right.

"3. Wither's division will form first line in Polk's corps; Cheatham's, the second line. Breckinridge's division forms first line in Hardee's corps; Cleburne's division, second line in Hardee's corps.

"4. McCown's division to form reserve, opposite centre, on high ground in rear of Cheatham's present quarters.

"5. Jackson's brigade, reserve, to the right flank, to report to Lieutenant-General Hardee.

"6. Two lines to be formed, from 800 to 1000 yards apart, according to ground.

"7. Chief of artillery to pay special attention to posting of batteries and supervise their work, seeing they do not causelessly waste their ammunition.

"8. Cavalry to fall back, gradually, before the enemy, reporting by courier every hour. When near our line, Wheeler will move to the right and Wharton to the left, to cover and protect our flanks, and report movements of the enemy; Pegram to fall to the rear, and report to the commanding general, as a reserve.

"9. To-night, if the enemy has gained his position in our front, ready for action, Wheeler and Wharton, with their whole commands, will make a night march to the

right and left, turn the enemy's flank, gain his rear, and vigorously assail his trains and rear guard, blocking the roads and impeding his movements every way, holding themselves ready to assail his retreating forces.

"10. All quartermasters, commissaries and ordnance officers will remain at their proper posts, discharging their appropriate duties. Supplies and baggage should be ready, packed for a move forward or backward, as the results of the day may require, and the trains should be in position, out of danger, teamsters all present and quartermasters in charge.

"11. Should we be compelled to retire, Polk's corps will move on Shelbyville pike and Hardee's on Manchester pike; trains in front, cavalry rear."

THE BATTLES

The campaign of Murfreesboro initiated with Forrest's expedition to the rear of Nashville, in west Tennessee, December 17th, where he fought with marvelous success for about two weeks, scattering, killing, wounding and capturing forces placed there to reinforce Rosecrans or Grant at discretion. This was preceded by Morgan's capture of Hartsville, on December 8th and 9th, on Bragg's right flank, across the Cumberland, a movement quickly concluded. Four days after Forrest left Columbia, on Bragg's left, to cross the Tennessee, Morgan left Alexandria, on his right, to cross the Cumberland for Kentucky. Both expeditions had the same general purpose, the destruction of Rosecrans' resources, of men and supplies, in the rear of Nashville. No expeditions of corresponding importance were ever attempted by the invader's cavalry.

While the cavalry afar off performed these parts, Wheeler was fighting between Murfreesboro and Nashville daily.

The proper "Battle of Murfreesboro" began with Wheeler's cavalry and Cheatham's infantry encountering the advance of Crittenden on the Murfreesboro and Nashville pike at sunrise, Friday, December 26th, and was con-

tinued day after day until Saturday afternoon, January 3d, 1863. The campaign ending that day was one of the most desperate conflicts of arms ever known in America. It was fighting in the open, from beginning to end. As at Shiloh, there were no breastworks or rifle-pits. As at Shiloh, men of the southwest fought to defend their homes against men of the northwest. At Shiloh the battle opened at sunrise and Grant's army, by three o'clock in the afternoon, had been driven four miles, in confusion to the river's brink. At Murfreesboro, the great day, Rosecrans' army had been driven from dawn to the middle afternoon, when it rallied on new and elevated ground, several miles from the line of the early attack, and at right angles to it, and the exhausted Confederates held every foot of the field over which their foe had retreated, with all his dead and wounded and war material abandoned. Bragg's army at Murfreesboro, December 31st, was, relatively to Rosecrans' weaker than Johnston's army at Shiloh, April 6th of the same year, was to Grant's.

We have seen that after four days' successful fighting to delay the advance of the left wing of the enemy, General Wheeler at nightfall on Monday, December 29th, led his jaded cavalry behind the infantry of General Bragg's right. Wharton at nightfall of Sunday came within the infantry line, but next day rode out to meet the advance of McCook's corps. He encountered a heavy advance guard of cavalry and fought it most of the day. Supported as it was by the infantry, there was no serious fighting.

McCook moved up and by the afternoon of Monday began heavy skirmishing with General James R. Chalmer's battalion of sharpshooters, attached to Withers' division, the extreme left at that time. The skirmishing was kept up as the enemy extended his lines to come into line of battle.

While this cracking of rifles was going on, a body of cavalry that Wharton had met the day before came up and dashed on Manigault's skirmishers as if to ride over them; but two companies from the same regiment ran up,

pouring a few volleys into them, when they galloped away.

It was the purpose of General Rosecrans to fall heavily upon Bragg's right, under Breckinridge, and forcing it back, to place his army in the rear of his opponent on the Murfreesboro pike.

It was the purpose of General Bragg to turn Rosecrans' left and get upon the Nashville pike, in his rear. Rosecrans intended to feint on Bragg's left, while he hurled his main force upon Breckinridge. Bragg discovered this plan and hurled Hardee, at dawn, upon Rosecrans' right, so as to give him so much to do on that wing that his tactical original planning would be entirely upset. In this particular Bragg won the initial of the battle.

This seems to have been all that was done on Bragg's left wing Monday afternoon, the 29th. Breckinridge's division comprised the extreme right as Withers' did the left. Breckinridge's lay along the edge of a forest, with an open field half a mile wide on its front. Now, the enemy approaching had taken possession of an eminence about six hundred yards from the Confederate's front. Breckinridge ordered this position carried. Two Kentucky regiments, the 41st Alabama and Cobb's battery moved upon it, took and held it, with loss of some valuable officers and a number of men.

Early Tuesday morning, the enemy being now in final position, the skirmishers on the left of Bragg and right of Rosecrans began firing vigorously. General Withers had placed Robertson's battery on his extreme left, which was then the left of Bragg's line of battle, and seeing this, about two-thirty o'clock the enemy made a dash to capture it. Two Alabama infantry regiments, the 26th and 39th, drove off the assailants, punishing them severely. General Rosecrans had determined thus early to make a grand rush with McCook's wing upon Withers the next morning at daylight. To get Robertson's guns out of the way, a second dash was made at them later in the afternoon. This time the 25th Alabama repulsed the attempt. Artillery firing had prevailed all along the line all day Tuesday, with considerable effect on Bragg. Breckinridge's men, who con-

tinued to hold the eminence they had taken the day before, suffered severely.

By the afternoon of Tuesday, General Bragg had detected the purpose of the enemy to rush a concentration of his forces upon the left wing, under Lieutenant-General Polk, at daylight Wednesday, the last day of the year. Hardee was at once ordered in person to the extreme left. He took with him Cleburne's division, from support of Breckinridge. McCown was moved forward from his original assignment as reserve to join Withers's left and thus became the extreme left of the Confederate line.

At dark, Tuesday, the opposing armies were arrayed against each other in line as follows: Hardee on Bragg's left; Polk on Hardee's right; Breckinridge's division, without support, the right of the line. Rosecrans' army was in three corps. McCook commanded his right wing, facing Hardee; Thomas commanded his centre, facing Polk; Thomas L. Crittenden commanded his left, facing Breckinridge.

Hardee's corps consisted of two divisions of infantry and Wharton's brigade of cavalry. McCown was posted on his front with Cleburne, five hundred yards on his rear, for support. Polk's corps consisted of two divisions, Withers in front and Cheatham, five hundred yards to the rear, as support. Breckinridge, as we have seen, had a division without support. Wheeler was on the right as Wharton was on the left.

The line ran through forest, with occasional farms interspersed. Peculiar cedar brakes abounded, the limbs of the trees branching out long from the ground. Often these brakes were so dense that neither artillery nor cavalry could pass through. The ground, too, was filled at places with great grey rocks, behind which a man could hide in safety from a front attack from a rifleman. The fences, where found, were of heavy rails. The field was a more difficult one from which to drive and pursue an army than Shiloh; indeed, one of the most difficult fields for a pursuing army in the annals of war.

Wednesday, the last day of the year, 1862, dawned fair

and biting cold. Snow lay in patches, in shaded places, and the ground was frozen stiff. The men were cold and had been cold and wet since Sunday, when all baggage was sent to the rear and fires prohibited on the line of battle.

At a quarter of six in the morning, fifteen minutes before daybreak, Major-General McCown and Major-General Cleburne reported in person at the headquarters of Lieutenant-General Hardee for final instructions. They found him at a small house. General Bragg sat his horse in the darkness near by.

Bragg, commanding, Lieutenant-General Hardee and Major-General McCown were graduates of West Point. Major-General Cleburne, who became one of the most renowned soldiers of the war, was an Irishman of respectable birth, about thirty-five years of age, who had been a non-commissioned officer of the British army. He was a lawyer at Helena, Arkansas, when he entered the Confederate army as captain.

The order of battle was, to attack the enemy's extreme right at break of day, and gradually face to the right. At six o'clock, daybreak, McCown's trans-Mississippians moved forward, McNair's brigade on his right, Ector's next, and Rains's on his left. The enemy were about six hundred to eight hundred yards on the front. Their pickets were captured or run in, and immediately McNair received a galling fire from both infantry and artillery, concealed in a cedar brake. The whole line of the Confederate front, under McNair, moved steadily forward, reserving their fire. Having now struck the camp, where the cooks were boiling coffee, they delivered one volley, charged bayonets, killed many and captured, among others, two brigadiers. While this was going on, a Confederate battery from the woods on the left threw shell into the fleeing foe, creating great confusion. Wharton, with 2000 cavalry, was stationed on the left of the infantry. When the firing broke forth in the camp, every man put off at the trot and soon galloped away to strike the foe on the flank and rear. The infantry pressed the enemy so vigorously back that Wharton

rode two-and-a-half miles before he could get behind them. Captain White opened his battery and Colonel Cox charged with his regiment. The 75th Illinois infantry was captured. A part of the Texas Rangers captured a four-gun battery complete, horses and drivers. Across the country was seen an immense wagon train and a large cavalry guard, supposed to be the 4th regulars. A hand-to-hand fight resulted in the route of the cavalry and the capture of the whole train, with 1000 infantry attending it.¹⁰

While in full pursuit of the enemy, Wharton heard that his own battery, which had been unable to keep up, was in peril of capture by a force of cavalry that had come around upon his rear. With two of his staff, he galloped back to seek the battery. Coming upon it, he found it with only twenty men left, the others having been enticed away, by the excitement of the chase, after the fleeing enemy. About a quarter of a mile away he saw perhaps 300 of the enemy's cavalry, coming at full speed. The battery, worked by the few men present, was turned upon them, and while some horses with empty saddles sped away at the first discharge, the whole array dissolved in disorder and flight under the continued shelling.

Presently these dispersed riders, having re-formed their broken ranks, appeared upon the force that was scattered along the line of captured wagons. Here they were more successful. General Wharton lost possession of some of them, but carried away the others, with five or six pieces of artillery, 327 head of beef cattle and their guard, many mules, cut from the wagons, and 400 prisoners. The Confederate loss in the fighting was 150 killed, wounded and missing. A private in the Texas Rangers killed in single combat Colonel Minor Milliken, of the enemy. Every Confederate who went into the day's work with a shot-gun or other inferior weapon and came out whole in body, had provided himself, by capture, with approved arms.

The captured property and prisoners were sent within Bragg's lines. The middle of the afternoon, the brigade was withdrawn to the left of Hardee's corps. The general

¹⁰Wharton's Report.

result of the day was, more prisoners than the brigade numbered.

General Wharton in his official report, says: "The battle of Wednesday was fought at great disadvantage on our part, the enemy's cavalry being much more efficiently armed and equipped." Then followed his estimate of the favorite weapon of Forrest: "The proper weapon for cavalry has proven to be the revolver." But only one of his regiments, the Rangers, was so armed.

We now return to the infantry fighting of that bloody day, and then shall take up the operations of General Wheeler on the Confederate right. We shall give the account of the enemy. Colonel W. H. Gibson, of an Ohio regiment, commanding a brigade, made official report as follows:

"At dawn of day orders were received to build fires and make coffee. I met General Willick on his way to see General Johnson. At 6:25, soon after our meeting, firing was heard on General Kirk's right. The brigade was instantly ordered to take arms and Lieutenant Miles was dispatched for General Willick. He was found and started for his command, but his horse was shot under him and he was taken prisoner before giving an order.

The lines of General Kirk soon yielded to an assault which no troops in the world could have withstood. The 32d and 39th moved promptly but were embarrassed by the retiring forces and their safety endangered by an assault of overwhelming numbers in front and flank. Lieutenant Belding moved back, with four guns, but was so hotly pressed that he could not put them in position with safety. He had done nothing in his original position because the lines falling back in our front were between his guns and the enemy's line. He and his men stood at their guns until the enemy were within fifty yards, when they fell back, leaving two guns, owing to the killing of the horses attached to one and the breaking of the pole of the other.

With cavalry on their right, infantry assailing their left and heavy masses rushing to the assault in the front, these

regiments were directed to retire as the only escape from annihilation or capture."¹¹

In the fighting here described a private, Clark, of the 1st Arkansas Rifles, Colonel Robert Withers Harper commanding, shot down Major-General Sill, who had so desperately fought Polk at Perryville, Kentucky, three months before.

Hardee says: "The divisions of McCown and Cleburne, in single line, had now driven the enemy with great slaughter for several miles through the cedar brakes toward the Nashville turnpike."

The order of battle was, to turn gradually toward the north as the fight proceeded. At the outset, as we have seen, McCown was in front of Cleburne. Both advanced, but the fighting and the difficulty of the cedar brakes compelled McCown to turn less to the right while advancing, so a gap was left between Withers' left in Polk's corps, and his right. Into this gap Cleburne moved. It was now that Hardee dispatched a young West Point cadet on his staff, Captain J. S. Kennard, of Mississippi, with the impetuous message: "Tell General Polk, for God's sake, to move up!"

It was seven o'clock, sunrise, before Withers and Cheatham, Polk's corps, began to support the battle. The whole line then, except Breckinridge on the extreme right, to prevent any flanking in that direction, became desperately engaged. On Withers' front was Sheridan, well posted amidst great rocks and the impenetrable cedars. McCook's corps, on the enemy's right, had all been driven but Sheridan. Colonel Loomis, in command of Withers' left brigade, moved forward. He was soon disabled and Colonel Coltart took command. Coltart was repulsed, from behind the rocks and from the dense cedars. Colonel Vaughan, commanding a brigade from Cheatham, now replaced Coltart's men. He charged with great spirit, but for the third time the sturdy Sheridan drove back the assailants. Cleburne's division from Hardee now came up to Polk's left. McCown's division should have been in that place, but, as we

¹¹Off. War Records, Series 1, vol. XX., p. 304, *et seq.*

have seen, in the ardor of pursuit, amidst impenetrable cedar thickets, McCown had left a gap into which Cleburne rushed from his original position in the rear.

Polk, reinforced by Cleburne from Hardee, proved too much for the steady resistance of Sheridan. Sheridan's batteries were enfiladed by Cleburne, while Vaughan and Coltart, of Polk's corps, re-formed their shattered ranks. The re-formed Confederate infantry charged. No soldiery on earth could have stood under the combined attack hurled upon them. Sheridan gave way. This was the first fruit of Polk's battle. "In this charge, the horses of every officer of the field and staff of Vaughan's brigade were killed except one, and the horses of all the officers of field and staff of every regiment except two were killed. The brigade (Vaughan's) lost one-third of all its force. It captured two of the enemy's field-guns."¹²

Although Sheridan's right and center had been driven from the fastnesses of the huge rocks and the protection of the dense cedar brakes, a strong position was yet held by his left. Manigault's South Carolina and Alabama regiments confronted this line. The bold charge was driven back with great slaughter. A second and a third time they returned to their bloody work. Maney's brigade, from Cheatham, now came to their support and the enemy beat a precipitate retreat. Maney captured four field-pieces, making six taken in the one action.

An incident of Maney's attack is worthy of preservation. A battery was playing heavily upon his advancing column. To which side did it belong? Officers were summoned to determine, but were not sure. One staff officer, of two who had ridden out to decide the doubt, was killed in the effort. The line became deeply interested. The color-bearer of the 4th Tennessee volunteered to settle it. The color-bearer of the 9th Tennessee asked permission to accompany him. These two, waving each the southern cross over his head, advanced about ten paces from the line. They remained fixed where they stood for ten minutes. In all that time the unknown battery redoubled its energy

¹²Polk's Report.

and sent shot and shell in utmost fury upon the Confederate line. The sergeants returned to their places unharmed. The line rushed upon the troublesome guns, captured them and put the gunners to flight.

At ten o'clock McCook's entire corps was in flight. It had been driven three miles. The Confederates along their whole line pressed forward. Thomas, in the centre, with his fine corps, and Crittenden on the left yet held position. About one-third of the Confederate attacking forces had been put *hors de combat*. The battle continued to rage furiously. Hardee only needed Stevenson's fine division of 10,000, then on the cars speeding to Mississippi to reinforce Cleburne's worn men, to have made "the rout of Rosecrans' army complete."

General Rosecrans late in the forenoon re-formed his broken line and massed a powerful force at Round Forest, at right angles to his position at dawn and four or five miles to his rear. He massed his field-guns there and supported them by an irresistible line of infantry. Polk attacked this position with great fury. Moore's 8th Tennessee regiment lost here 306 men and officers out of 405 led into action, the colonel commanding being among the killed. Savage's 16th Tennessee lost 207 men and officers out of 405 led into action.

Breckinridge was still on the east side of Stone's River, not having been called from his position. At eleven o'clock Polk asked General Bragg to send four of Breckinridge's brigades to him, to join in the proposed assault on Round Forest. Breckinridge ordered them to join Polk. They did not appear together, however, but in two detachments of two brigades each, in from two to three hours' time. Brigadier-General Adams, arriving with the first detachment, was sent at once into action. Breckinridge came in person with the last. All went in, but the victory, which had seemed certain, was lost by irregular assault. The loss was very heavy on the Confederate side. Polk thought nothing was wanting to throw Rosecrans' remaining wing

into rout, as complete as Hardee had inflicted on his right, but the timely aid of the four brigades of Breckinridge.¹³

The Confederate commander had no reserves. Every brigade within reach of the field was in line of battle. Every regiment fought desperately, except that fractional part of Breckinridge's division on the extreme right that was not sent to Polk late in the day. On the other hand, the enemy put into action only 43,400 of his available 58,112. The Confederates who fought numbered about 35,000, that is, about 8000 less than the invader. It does not appear that General Bragg directed his fight; Rosecrans was all day on the field. The enemy chose his positions and these were protected by immense rocks, heavy rail fences and impenetrable cedar brakes. His loss was twenty per cent., or 8778. Bragg's loss was heavier—27 per cent., or about 10,000. The invader was driven from his own field for miles. He carried off no material of war, whereas the Confederates held the field permanently, captured thirty pieces of artillery, 6000 stands of small arms and hundreds of wagons and teams. A singular comparison of captures of horses and mules by the armies respectively is shown. The enemy reported their captures of this kind to be 417 and that the captures from them were 2018, indicating the difference in the effective work of the cavalry on either side. General Bragg intended Morgan, with his 2000 cavalry, to appear and operate on the rear of the enemy, but the messenger sent after him, then slowly fighting his way into Kentucky, did not reach him in time.

After the day was done, Hardee reported his conclusions touching the character of the battle and the relative fighting qualities of the armies. He had seen more than one war and was a most accomplished soldier. Here, as at Shiloh, northwestern men met southwestern men. The defenders had driven the invaders from both fields and slept on them. Hardee reported: "Whenever the conflict was confined principally to musketry and the enemy had no advantage in artillery, we were successful."

¹³Polk's Report.

We shall now offer some interesting testimony, descriptive of the titanic conflict as the enemy saw it. Major R. Klein, commanding a battalion of Indiana cavalry wrote:

"When our forces first gave way before the overwhelming numbers of the enemy, the efficiency of my battalion was destroyed in being divided by one of our own cavalry regiments, scattering the men by running through them. This movement, had it been in the opposite direction, would have been a most gallant charge and doubtless, from its determination, an efficient one." The major of the 4th Ohio cavalry reported: "I was ordered to protect a train in the heat of the battle, but was soon driven away from it by shells from the enemy's guns and by his cavalry. The panic now became so general that our regiment in leaving the field got scattered," etc. Captain Jeeter of the same Ohio cavalry reported, "a general consternation among our cavalry regiments." Major James W. Parramore, commanding the left wing of the 3d Ohio cavalry, reported: "In the severe fighting of Wednesday, 31st ultimo, when we had been forced back as far as General McCook's ammunition train, and were drawn up in front of it for protection, the furious charge of the enemy's cavalry, preceded by a shower of shells, caused a pretty general stampede of our cavalry, led off by the 2d Tennessee, on our right, and followed by the 4th and 1st Ohio and the first battalion of the 3d Ohio cavalry."

Lieutenant Colonel Joseph W. Burke, commanding the 10th Ohio infantry, was in charge of the bridge over Stewart's Creek on the 31st, while the great battle raged.¹⁵ His official report tends to sustain that of General Rosecrans, that Stanley's cavalry remained well within the lines of infantry on that bloody day. Of the things he saw he made a graphic report:

"About one o'clock a squadron of affrighted negroes came charging at full gallop from Murfreesboro toward Stewart's Creek and with such impetuosity and recklessness that over one hundred crossed the bridge before I

¹⁵Burke came to Alabama after the war and appeared in various positions of usefulness and honor for years.



George Knox Miller

CAPT. TALLADEGA (ALA.) MOUNTAIN
RANGERS, CO. A, 8TH CONF. CAV., W. B.
WADE, COL., WHEELER'S CORPS, ARMY OF
TENNESSEE, C. S. A.

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could check the progress of the main cavalcade. They were dismounted, and some of them ducked by my men. This was the advance of what seemed to be the whole army—cavalry with jaded horses, artillery and infantry soldiers breathless and holding on to wagons, relating the most incredible defeats and annihilation of the army and their respective regiments, came streaming down the road and pouring through the woods on their way to the bridge. In vain did my small guard, stationed on the road, try to check this panic. Officers drew their revolvers, but the fugitives heeded them not."

However, Lieutenant-Colonel Burke succeeded in rallying 4000 fugitives, and officers were assigned to command them and take them back under Lieutenant-Colonel Dickinson. Presently Mr. Reily, a citizen of the vicinity, came up, announcing to Burke that as soon as his improvised ranks came near the fighting they broke without firing a gun and were at that moment in full retreat toward the bridge. "The scene on the road," continued Burke, "was indescribable. Teamsters had abandoned their wagons and came back mounted on their mules and horses; wagons were packed across the road and many capsized on the side of the pike; horses ran wild through the woods, and although men were allowed by me to pass as wagon guards, there were none at their posts. They had left the road and were bivouacking in small parties in the woods."¹⁶

No doubt the scene described by Lieutenant-Colonel Burke was the effect of the operations of Wharton's and Wheeler's cavalry. The facts are valuable here to illustrate the peculiar prowess of the Confederate soldier mounted.

We resume the narrative of the cavalry operations under General Wheeler. For this purpose a private letter, written by an officer of his immediate command from the field, will suffice.¹⁷ It will be remembered that while Wheeler

¹⁶All extracts above are from Records of the Civil War, p. 654.

¹⁷Captain George Knox Miller, of the 8th Confederate cavalry, who left the University of Virginia in the spring of 1861 to volunteer in the Confederate army as a private. He is now (1911) and has been for many years a distinguished citizen of his native state, Alabama.

was chief of cavalry of the Army of Tennessee his immediate personal activity was on the right wing in the battle of the 31st December, General Wharton operating under him on the left wing:

“CAVALRY CAMP, NEAR MURFREESBORO, TENN.,
“January 2d, 1863.

“ The morning after Christmas Day, which day had been spent by many officers and men horse-racing, card-playing and in other diversions possible in open camp, no tents in sight, I felt feeble, but being anxious to be with my men, reported for duty. We had a drill in the forenoon, but about twelve o'clock heavy firing in the direction of Le Vergne warned us that the enemy were not spending the holidays in festivities at Nashville. The cannonading gradually drew nearer, and soon an order came for that part of the brigade in camp to come up to Le Vergne in all haste. We were soon in the saddle and a trot of five miles brought us to L——, in front of which place we found the enemy. It was now three o'clock in the evening and the enemy not retiring, as usual, when out merely foraging, we knew pretty well that something more stirring than common was in the wind. Our regiment was sent forward to the left of the pike to support a portion of the 3d Alabama cavalry, which the enemy was pressing pretty vigorously. After going about a mile we dismounted, left our horses under protection of a hill and dashed forward as skirmishers. A quarter of a mile brought us upon the enemy, concealed in a cedar thicket. They opened on us at about one hundred and fifty yards, when the order to charge was given. Forward we dashed, over two fences and to within thirty yards of the Yanks. Here we had as hot a little brush as one could want on a December day. The Yanks were better posted than we were, and in the growing darkness had the light in their favor. Besides, their clothes were so nearly the color of the cedar, behind which they were posted, that it was almost impossible to see them. For nearly an hour we fought them, each man at his tree. I was on foot and

walked a little in advance of our line to find better ground for some of our boys, who were very much exposed. Just as I knelt at the foot of a tree and was drawing a bead upon a big rascal, a minie ball grazed my pantaloons a little above the knee. No great damage was done except tearing the yellow cord I wear for seam stripe. I had bark knocked into my eyes several times, but was not hurt in the least.

"Finding the enemy well supported, we withdrew, inch by inch, until it grew so dark we could not distinguish one near-by object from another, and nothing but the flash of the random gun told us the enemy had taken position for the night. We could now see in the distance the whole horizon, lit up by their camp-fires. It took no ghost to tell us that Rosecrans had begun his long expected advance from Nashville. We could distinctly hear heavy cannonading to our left all day, on the Nolensville pike, showing that he was advancing with a heavy column on each road.

"The next day being the turn of our regiment to go on picket, we returned about ten o'clock to prepare rations. We cooked until twelve, laid ourselves down, to be thoroughly drenched with rain, and were called by bugle at three. At daylight we advanced for the field and had just thrown out pickets when the enemy advanced upon us. I had command of the pickets on the extreme left, and as the enemy advanced, fell back slowly, skirmishing the whole way. Our forces on our right, and between me and the pike, having fallen back faster than I anticipated, threw me for a time in the rear of a large body of the enemy, where I had full view of the heavy column as it rolled down the pike, infantry, cavalry and artillery. I noticed one whole regiment of their cavalry, mounted on white horses (regulars). It was so close that I could distinctly hear the commands of the different officers. Gradually we fell back, keeping parallel and opposite to our two pieces of artillery, which moved slowly back, shelling the advance of the enemy at intervals.

"Stewart's Creek has very steep banks, and our purpose was to cross it at the bridge, on the pike; but as we

neared that point, we found that our artillery had already crossed over and General Wheeler had destroyed the bridge. The enemy's cannon were then raking the pike. Fortunately, we discovered a narrow path leading to a ford about a quarter of a mile above the bridge. We had barely time to cross when the enemy were close at our heels.

"Night came, and we established a picket line for the night along the south bank of the creek. A cold, drenching rain had fallen all day and there was another cheerless night before us. My squadron formed the second relief and was to stand four hours, from eleven o'clock to three o'clock. I was lying on a wet blanket, nearly freezing. I was called to go on duty and immediately roused up my wet and sleepy boys. The enemy's picket line was on the opposite side of the creek and so near to our own that we could hear them in low conversation. While I was passing along the bank, going from one post to another, one of their pickets fired on me, at not more than fifty yards' distance, and came near taking off my head. I called to him that he 'had very little to do!'—and moved on.

"Our high position gave a full view of the enemy's camp. As far as the eye could reach to the north the whole earth seemed covered with their fires, from which a noise arose like swarming bees. I slipped down to within fifty yards of the old bridge and could hear a hundred hammers going, building a pontoon bridge to replace it. I was certain that morning would bring us hot work, but nothing disturbed the scene except occasional shots from our pickets and the enemy's sharpshooters. The sun came out as genial as on a spring day, and, taking advantage of the protection of a house near the creek, I stood and viewed the Yankee horde as it filled the open woods and the fields in front of us. At eleven o'clock my relief came on again and I posted the boys behind trees and fences. For hours they amused themselves shooting at the Yankee sharpshooters on the other side of the creek. One of my boys, John C. Duncan, a very jovial fellow, singled out a Yankee and they fired away at each other

for over three hours, and being in speaking distance they abused each other heartily all the time. At last John bantered him to stop shooting and exchange newspapers with him. After considerable parleying, it was agreed on both sides to establish an armistice for a few minutes. All ceased firing. John got a paper and went down to the creek; the Yankee did likewise, while their whole army about the place came out and looked on. Papers were exchanged and compliments passed. I went down myself and exchanged papers with several of the Yankees, or rather federal Kentuckians. They asked many questions about friends and acquaintances in our army and we parted at sundown. But, true to their instincts, they took advantage of the armistice to throw some sharpshooters across the creek, and drove off our pickets from a hill that commanded the road. We soon double-teamed on them and sent them back at a John Gilpin gait.

"Another cold, rainy night on picket duty guard and Monday 29th dawned. The sun was already up an hour or more and all was quiet. We began to think the day would be passed as the previous one, but soon we saw a column moving down to the ford where we had crossed. A company was sent there to oppose their crossing, when they opened upon it with artillery. Our regiment was covered by a house, and when Colonel Wade gave the order to fall back we had to cross an open field. While doing so, they threw a shell into our column, striking a horse and bursting in him without injuring the rider at all. Their whole army then crossed the creek and we fell back slowly towards Murfreesboro. General Bragg sent us word not to fight them too much, but to let them come on."

The four-days' confronting of the advancing foe was over. Captain Miller's lengthy, graphic and most interesting letter to his friend at home continues:

"We reached our infantry lines about sundown (Tuesday, December 30th) and falling behind them crossed Stone's River and drew up in line of battle not far from Murfreesboro, where we received orders to rest and feed our horses, prepared to take up our march again at mid-

night. Hearing this order, we supposed we were to evacuate the position. Far otherwise. We were aroused from our slumbers at midnight, saddled up, mounted, and in a few minutes were following General Wheeler at full gallop up the Lebanon road. It was raining and so dark that one could not see the trooper by his side. When we struck the ford at Stone's River, we only knew we were riding in water by the splashing noise of our horses' feet. Proceeding out of camp about five miles and crossing to the north side of this river, we continued about two miles, then left the Lebanon pike and took the one leading to the little village of Jefferson, directly in the rear of the Yankee army. Daylight found us near that village, when we halted and fed our horses. Soon in the saddle again, leaving the main road, we took by-paths and about noon came up close to the village of La Vergne. Into this we dashed—four or five regiments of us—at full speed, firing a few shots as we rode. At once we found in our possession a large train, over 300 heavily loaded wagons with quartermaster's and commissary's stores, and some 300 prisoners captured. The officers went quickly to work paroling the prisoners while the men burned the wagons. It was a sight to make all rebeldom glad. Mules, stamped-ing with burning wagons hung to their traces, Yankees running, all appliances for our subjugation!

"We only tarried an hour at La Vergne. Taking a southwesterly direction, we had only gone a mile or two when we heard the Yankees clubbing the poor villagers, thinking no doubt that they were making sad havoc in the rebel ranks.

"Applying the spurs for two hours, we dropped like a tornado upon quiet little Nolensville. Here it was La Vergne repeated. We found squads of Yankees here and there and some 150 wagons, mostly loaded with ammunition and medicines, together with several fine ambulances. These latter we preserved; the others we set the flames upon. The Yankees we sent on their way rejoicing, as paroled prisoners of war, back to their New England households.

"We tarried but a short time at N——, then pushed down a rich little valley where we found large numbers of their wagons filled with corn, bedclothing, poultry, house-furniture, eggs, butter, etc., etc., of which they had just plundered farms. We relieved them of their plunder, put the prisoners, bareback, on mules, burned their wagons and rode on.

"Four hundred and fifty to five hundred wagons, 600 prisoners, hundreds of mules and horses captured, sums up our achievements of the day (Tuesday, 30th); not a man lost from our ranks. We also had an immense deal of fun.

"We rested part of that night west of Nolensville, having made a circuit of sixty miles (entirely across the rear of General Rosecrans' army) At daylight next morning we found ourselves on the left wing of our army, in front of Murfreesboro. As I said before, I was very weak when I went on duty, the 26th, and four days of constant riding through drenching cold rain completely exhausted me. In the morning I was so sick that I could not sit my horse. I got one of the boys to carry me back to the wagon train."

On New Year's Day, 1863, the Confederates gathered arms from the battlefield; they also built pens of the heavy cedar rails and threw the enemy's dead into them, as a temporary arrangement. General Bragg ordered Wheeler to unite his own brigade with Wharton's and operate upon the trains of the enemy running between the battlefield and Nashville. The trains, however, proved to be ambulances and army wagons hauling the wounded to improvised city hospitals.

The next day, Friday, at two o'clock Wheeler struck an ordnance train heavily guarded by cavalry and infantry support. The guard was dispersed. The wagons were generally upset, but the attempt to destroy them by fire failed, the guard having re-formed and come to their rescue.

Hardee seems to have had no engagement on Friday,

but Polk did some sharp fighting, driving the enemy from Round Forest. In some of this work Lieutenant W. M. Polk, a son of the lieutenant-general, reported that in an artillery duel he found his field-piece could not throw projectiles to the enemy's position, while their guns reached him with ease.

General Bragg, always full of fight, had no thought of accepting the result of the last day of the year as final. He desired to possess himself of a position on the opposite or east side of Stone's River, from which he might enfilade Rosecrans' left wing. To accomplish this, he selected General Breckinridge to take a hill about sixteen hundred yards in advance of his then position. The enemy's division, General Cleve's, already occupied this hill, and behind it, over the river, was a heavy force of infantry and artillery in support, some fifty-two guns, parked.

The commanding general and Breckinridge met on their horses in the woods Friday afternoon, January 2d, and the attack was ordered. Two of Breckinridge's brigades, sent to Polk on the 31st, had not yet returned. They were recalled, but two had to march two miles to reach the field, and two one mile. It was agreed that four o'clock should be the hour for beginning the advance upon the hill. Polk was to open at that hour upon the enemy with several batteries and Wharton, with his brigade, was to rest upon Breckinridge's right, prepared to assist as might appear best—the latter proving a very important and disastrously neglected feature of this attack.

Breckinridge formed his lines: there were 4500 men. Pillow and Hanson, with their brigades, formed the first line. Three hundred yards to their rear, Adams and Colonel R. L. Gibson formed the second and supporting line. The batteries moved in the rear of the second line—Graves, then Robertson's Louisiana and a section of Semple's Alabama, commanded by Lieutenant E. J. Fitzpatrick, and Lieutenant R. W. Anderson's battery. General Rosecrans looked on from a distance, across the river. He was confident.

Precisely at four o'clock the signal gun in the centre of

the rear boomed; Polk's batteries threw shot heavily to the front; the knightly Breckinridge, with his young son, Cabell, at his side, rode forward, and the whole division with quick and bounding step followed him. A more spontaneous spring forward of troops was never witnessed. It is marvelous, the infatuation of men with the perils of the strife!

Pillow's brigade, on the right, was the guide, and Hanson was expected to dress on him. As Pillow marched, his right passed a thicket of woods, and from this his line was enfiladed by the enemy. Then Hanson's brigade ran upon the river and was in a measure broken. The supporting line came up and mingled with the front line. Nevertheless, the artillery drove the enemy from the woods, the infantry drove Cleve from the hill down under the bluff of the river and across, and the slaughter of the foe was great. The enemy were prepared, however, for the emergency. They had fifty-two guns¹⁸ trained on the hill and a large infantry support.

Seventeen hundred of Breckinridge's dead and wounded lay on the field. General Hanson had fallen. The remnant left gave way and the falling back was nearly a rout. Three guns were abandoned, two because the horses were dead or disabled. At the third only one gunner was left, a boy named Wright. The broken columns in the early night rallied upon the very ground whence they had started.

"We were commanded to do an impossible thing," wrote Breckinridge in deep humiliation to the adjutant general at Richmond. Pillow, who led the attack on the hill, having been transferred to other service, then told General Bragg that the error of direction was in not shaping his original course through the thicket of woods, to drive the enemy out, rather permitting him to pass it on his right to be enfiladed and then halted to clear the woods, thus throwing the second line into confusion.

General Bragg's official report, in undisguised chagrin, discussed elaborately the orders he had given to prepare Breckinridge for the attack of Friday afternoon, and the

¹⁸Rep. to General Rosecrans, Off. War Records.

purpose to protect Polk's right. Among forces made available to General Breckinridge, he enumerates,—“Wharton and Pegram, about 2000 men, to join in the attack on his right.” General Breckinridge says: “I sent two staff officers to communicate with Pegram and Wharton, but received no intelligence up to the moment of assault.” The vital feature of the assault, the assistance of the cavalry on the right, was wholly neglected. Where the blame rests is not clear. General Wharton reported that, after concluding certain operations assigned to him on Thursday, he was ordered to Murfreesboro. “Upon Friday,” he says, “I was ordered by General Bragg (?) to the right. When Breckinridge's division attacked the enemy's left on Friday afternoon, having received no intimation (sic) that such an attack was contemplated, I accompanied Pegram's battery to the front and right, with companies D and K of the Texas Rangers and my escort company.” Wharton, therefore, did not expect to assist General Breckinridge and had received no orders. As the noise of the battle reached him, he rode towards it and put Pegram's battery in action, from a hill, upon a heavy column of the enemy advancing upon Breckinridge. This fire was effective—at a distance of five hundred yards shot down the color-bearer of the foe and threw his ranks into confusion. At that moment Wharton's horse was struck and the rider fell under him. In a short time he was remounted, but, meanwhile, “the battery, without any cause whatever,” had been run off, the advance by Breckinridge made, and the bloody repulse afflicted the army. Breckinridge had lost 1700 brave men in forty-five minutes. Wharton held his command in the saddle all night between the bivouac of the broken columns of infantry and the exultant foe.

What would General Bragg do! This was the question in the first half of Friday night, following the afternoon slaughter of Breckinridge's command. Rumor had it that a general battle would be ordered the next day. That night (Friday) at twelve-fifteen Cheatham and Withers came to Lieutenant-General Polk with a written

and signed protest against the alleged purpose of the commanding general. They urged an immediate retreat. The army was in a disorganized condition; some of the brigadiers had failed in the late battle to justify the confidence placed in them, they feared "great disaster" if another general engagement should be forced on the enemy. Polk sent his aide-de-camp, Lieutenant Richmond, with the joint letter of his two major-generals to the quarters of the commanding general instantly, with his favorable endorsement. Richmond found the commanding general in bed, at two o'clock, in one of the handsomest houses in Murfreesboro. He read one-half of the letter, and testily replied, from under the cover: "Say to the general we shall maintain our position at every hazard."

Polk at once, in the darkness and sleet, sent the news to Hardee. "I think the decision unwise, in high degree," he wrote.

In the forenoon of Saturday the corps commanders and some of the division commanders met at General Bragg's quarters, and after hearing them he gave the order to retreat that night. The roads to Tullahoma were promptly filled with troops plodding and wagons dragging their difficult way. The weather was intensely cold, sleet and rain alternating, and the men, already long exposed to cold and hunger, were soon drenched to the skin. The test of endurance was terrible.

Wheeler was ordered to protect the rear of the two marching columns, one on the Shelbyville road, the other on the direct road to Tullahoma. Of this service we shall see presently. Twelve hundred wounded were left in Murfreesboro.

The concession of the general to his subordinates did not restore peace between them. The army was dissatisfied with the campaign. The general was chagrined and humiliated by the undercurrent of sentiment against him in the army and the violent denunciations of him by the newspapers, in the rear. He had marched away from the bloody field of Perryville; he now marched away from the holocaust at Murfreesboro. Because of bad generalship in

Kentucky, by which that state was lost to the Confederacy three months before, Bragg had received the formal protest of Hardee, while Kirby Smith applied to be removed from his department. Would he now abandon Tennessee?

Arrived at Tullahoma, the general addressed a note to his corps and division commanders, requesting them, in effect, to state in writing that the order to retreat from Murfreesboro was not of his original suggestion but of theirs. All replied, suggesting his resignation of command of that army. Polk, in this connection, advised President Davis to replace Bragg with Johnston. Johnston, he said, was preëminently the man to give confidence to the army and to the public.

General Bragg, at Pensacola, had organized the best disciplined army of the Confederate service. As chief of staff at Corinth he so assisted in the organization as to contribute incalculably to the efficiency of the army there. On the field of Shiloh he more than sustained the reputation he had won at Buena Vista. But with all his self-consecration, his purity of life, his daring valor, he had not proven a capacity to command a great army in action.

The recommendation was unanimous from the ranking generals of his army that the commander should retire from his office. The specific complaint was not given. He was on his horse, on the left of Hardee's line, at five o'clock, an hour before dawn the morning the battle opened. No mention is made of his presence on the field after that time. Probably he was not there. In this he differed from the practice of the Johnstons, Lee and Beauregard, each of whom rode with the front line. The president was informed of the complaint and the advice given, but disregarded all. A true soldier and devoted patriot, General Bragg was misplaced for service.

CHAPTER VII

1863

THE "HORSE MARINE" EXPEDITION AND DOVER

New Year's day, 1863, the day following the bloody field of Murfreesboro, General Bragg received misguiding news. Rosecrans ran wagon-trains, hauling his wounded to improvised hospitals in Nashville. Some Confederate scouts, seeing these, reported the retreat of the enemy. Thereupon the commanding general ordered Wheeler to intercept the supposed movement. So the village of La Vergne again became the scene of collision of hostile troops. At the outset of his ride, Wheeler found there a park of many army wagons loaded. He sent into the Confederate lines as many, with their teams, as he could spare guards for and destroyed the remainder.

Sunday, January 4th, Wheeler remained between the Confederate army, retreating to Tullahoma, and Rosecrans in fortified camp on Stone's River. Polk brought up the rear of the retreat, and to him the chief of cavalry wrote the following letter:

"HEADQUARTERS CAVALRY,
"Six miles from Murfreesborough,
"Jany. 5th, 1863. 6 P. M.

"Lieutenant-General Leonidas Polk,

"General: I left Murfreesborough last night about nine o'clock, having engaged the enemy between Murfreesborough and the river for about an hour before sunset. I left a picket in front of the town. We formed our first line this morning, four miles from Murfreesborough. The cavalry we kept back with the greatest ease, but finally they brought up several lines of infantry in line of battle with colors flying, cavalry on the flanks and artillery placed in favor-

able positions. The last attack was five miles from Murfreesborough, the shock of which was sufficient to prevent them from making any farther advance to-night. We must have killed and wounded a great many of them. Our loss, six or seven wounded, included my aide, Lieutenant Wailes. My adjutant, Lieutenant Burford, was slightly wounded yesterday by a shell.

"I shall have no difficulty in keeping back the enemy from Bell Buckle for several days, if General Wharton succeeds in keeping them back on the Shelbyville pike. Of course, it will take more time to reach Wartrace and Shelbyville.

"Very respectfully, general,

"Your obedient servant,

"J. WHEELER,

"Brigadier-General and Chief of Cavalry."

General Bragg, at Tullahoma, had no employment for his army. He remained there six months, almost to the day, still unoccupied by the enemy. Indeed, the general result of the winter campaign had discouraged the people of the United States in the war of their government against the Confederacy. Especially had the states of the upper Mississippi Valley grown weary of it. The "Knights of Golden Circle" was a powerful secret organization in some of those states opposed to the war. The legislature of Indiana was out of line with President Lincoln's war measures, and only the energy and resolution of the governor, Morton, prevented serious outbreaks of opposition in that state. Clement Laird Vallandigham was an anti-war Democrat, representing an Ohio district in Congress. He was defeated for reelection in 1862, and while Bragg and Rosecrans confronted each other at a distance of only twenty miles all the remainder of the winter, the whole spring and well into the summer in inactivity, Vallandigham canvassed his state for the office of governor on a peace platform. He was finally arrested by military orders, at midnight taken from his bed in his own house and imprisoned in a United States fort on the New England coast without civil or military trial. These were some only of the evidences of

demonstrations of public sentiment in the United States unfavorable to the prolongation of the war. General Rosecrans, himself a Democrat, was not slow to interpret them. His army was composed chiefly of western farmers. He did not suspend in any measure his preparations for a campaign against the Confederates, but he prepared slowly and very thoroughly. He collected vast stores at Nashville, and near there, and fortified the positions. The advance upon Atlanta had begun, he claimed.

January 7th General Wheeler received orders to ride to the rear of the enemy, and especially to destroy enormous stores deposited at Ashland, a landing some twenty-five miles below Nashville on the north bank of the Cumberland, whence they were to be hauled by wagons to the city.

The expedition set out immediately, with select men and horses. Several days were spent in the capture of wagon trains found on the pikes between Murfreesboro and Nashville and out on the Columbia railroad about Franklin, and in burning bridges.

Approaching the Cumberland, west of Nashville, the command was divided. Colonel W. B. Wade was placed over a detachment consisting of the 8th Confederate, his own regiment, the 1st Alabama, Holman's Tennessee battalion and one piece of artillery under a lieutenant, with orders to ride up the bank to the river shore and attack such boats as he might find. The general passed on with the other part of the command, a little more than half, to the vicinity of Clarksville. Late in the afternoon of the 12th Wheeler struck the river, and presently the transport "Charter" appeared with a boat in tow, both vessels loaded, bound up-stream. The artillery and dismounted cavalry opened fire on them and both boats came to shore and surrendered. The next day, January 13th, some armed vessels, having heard of the fate of the "Charter," appeared on the scene and began without ceremony a vigorous shelling of the land bordering the river. Wheeler returned the fire, but after several hours' fighting in this unequal way, and having failed to get Wade back to his support, he withdrew.

Colonel Wade, with his detachment, had an experience

on the evening of the 12th similar to General Wheeler's. He found many cords of steamboat wood stacked on the bank of the river. Behind this he readily concealed all his force. That night he hailed a steamer plying the water and captured her. The next morning the transport "Trio," rounding the abrupt bend in the bank above, was floating smoothly down stream. A shell from the concealed gun on shore was sent through her cabin, and, with the rude awakening she turned her prow to the shore and struck her colors. So Wade had two captive steamers to his credit. Hardly had the "Trio" been received when two other steamers hove in sight, the "Parthenia" and a hospital boat, the "Hastings," loaded with wounded men from the late field of Murfreesboro, bound for hospitals at Louisville. "Fire!" shouted Wade to his men. The "Hastings" and the "Parthenia" promptly struck their colors and came to shore. The captive boats now numbered four. The hospital boat and the soldiers aboard were paroled. She was ordered for security to cross to the opposite bank, while the torch was applied to the "Trio" and the "Parthenia."

Colonel Wade, standing on the deck of the paroled "Hastings," heard firing up the river, and presently the gunboat "Sidell" rounded the bend, shelling the banks as she came. Having come within hailing distance, Wade shouted to her: "Haul down your colors and surrender, or, by G—d, I'll blow you out of the water!" The gunboat answered with a broadside into the bank, below the woodpile, which did no harm. From the concealed Confederates now came a shower of bullets and shell upon the gunboat. She struck her colors and came to shore.

Chaplain M. P. Gaddis, of the United States army, on board the hospital boat "Hastings," was put in command by Colonel Wade, with instructions to take the paroled steamer and the paroled soldiers aboard on to their destination, Louisville. Beds for many of the wounded found on the boat consisted of bales of cotton taken from Nashville warehouses. Colonel Wade allowed the cotton to remain for the use of the wounded, on condition that all should be burned on the arrival of the steamer and its load

at Louisville. The conditions of the parole of the soldiers, the boat and the cotton were considered by the United States authorities in control at Louisville and the whole transaction between Colonel Wade and Chaplain Gaddis pronounced void. At the time an agreement was in force between General Bragg and General Rosecrans to the effect that all paroles, to be respected, must be approved by the commanding general of one of the armies.

The gunboat "Sidell" was burned and her commander, Lieutenant Van Dorn, was carried off in captivity. The afternoon of the 13th Colonel Wade forded or swam the Cumberland with his troops, or a part of them, and burned the enormous supplies stored by the invader at Ashland on the north bank.¹ He next rejoined the main command.

Wade entered the army at the outbreak of the war, having previously seen service in the war with Mexico. His residence was in Columbus, Mississippi. His gallantry at Shiloh attracted attention, and after that battle, when a reorganization of the cavalry arm of the army was ordered, he became colonel of a regiment called "8th Confederate," because composed of companies from two states, Mississippi and Alabama.

We have seen that General Wheeler was engaged on the forenoon of January 13th with gunboats on the river in an unequal combat. This battle raged at a distance of only four or five miles from the river bank, where Wade was capturing the boats. The general dispatched a courier to bring the colonel and all his command immediately to his support in an emergency. The message was delivered, but the succor needed failed to appear. Next, the general sent Captain Burford, his intelligent adjutant, to hasten Wade's return. Wade decided to complete his work of destroying the boats and join the general afterward. The general requested a court-martial to try the colonel for disobedience of orders, but when the court met and heard the charges it exonerated him.

Chaplain Gaddis reported to his government severe

¹Letters of Colonel W. B. Wade to his wife, under date "Outpost, Feb. 15, 1863."

strictures on Colonel Wade's conduct in the capture of the "Hastings," alleging that the officer was drunk. The colonel commanding, describing the events of the day by letter to his wife, said:

"I wrote to you some two weeks ago, inclosing Yankee accounts of the capture of a gunboat and other boats in which I and my command were foully slandered in respect to our treatment of the prisoners. I was anxious that you should see those accounts. Among other things, they charged me with being drunk, and that is the only one which, as I knew, you would suspect to be true. I was no more drunk than I am now, and I have not taken a drink in ten days. I am now in command of Wheeler's old brigade and it has more than 3000 men. I have too much responsibility to get drunk."

Wheeler now turned his course back toward the army lines. General Bragg had already reported the splendid success of the expedition to the government, accompanied by a demand for a major-general's commission for its young leader. Before General Wheeler arrived at army headquarters, Congress had passed a resolution of thanks to him and his command and his promotion to the rank of major-general was made.

The effect of Wheeler's "horse marine" work on the spirits of the enemy was plain. The authorities in Washington were in profound chagrin. General Rosecrans telegraphed sorrowfully to Halleck: "The rebel cavalry, which outnumbered ours four to one, is doing us great mischief. I must have horses and saddles to mount some infantry." The requisition was for 5000 fresh horses and their equipments. The response was: "Three thousand horse equipments have been ordered sent for you with least possible delay." Four thousand organized cavalymen were also sent to increase Stanley's corps. Rosecrans reported Bragg's cavalry—not more than 3500 effective—at 13,200. Halleck, in unseemly excitement, telegraphed on the 14th to the commander at Nashville: "Notify Fort Henry to notify Fort Donelson that Forrest is in the neighborhood and to look out." The requisition for 5000 fresh horses

having been accepted, General Rosecrans, on further reflection, asked leave to raise it to 8000. Quartermaster-General Meigs from Washington replied: "It will take some time to get 8000 horses." He had 1000 ready at Indianapolis, and as many more in view, but wanted to know if the general of the army could not collect from Tennessee farmers the shortage. "Why do you not," he wrote, "send your wagons (?) for forced marches to intercept cavalry?" A wagon-load of infantry to "intercept" Wheeler! Halleck thus early urged upon Rosecrans that Bragg should not be permitted to rest at Tullahoma. "This," he insisted, "is of vital importance." Bragg, however, remained at Tullahoma six months, undisturbed from Murfreesboro.

General Rosecrans was angry. The paroles of the prisoners, taken on the boats, were irregular. He wrote fiercely to General Bragg, sending his letter to Wheeler to be forwarded. Wheeler sent it back endorsed: "Respectfully returned. Being an officer of General Bragg's army, I do not feel authorized to forward a communication, the language of which, when referring to the commanding general of the army, indicates so little regard for the courtesies that are presumed to govern gentlemen in their intercourse."

General Johnston now appeared at Tullahoma from Mississippi. Hearing this, General Rosecrans sent to him the letter rejected on the cavalry outpost, with the impertinent endorsement, as he thought. Johnston politely replied that the correspondence should be limited to General Bragg.

The aspect of the war was clouded with charges and counter-charges of inhuman treatment of prisoners of the field and non-combatants in their homes. President Davis issued a feeling proclamation, threatening retaliation.

A citizen of Alabama, having visited Tullahoma to see relatives in Wheeler's cavalry, stopped at army headquarters, inquiring where he should find the cavalry. A laugh of amusement passed among the staff officers present. "Wheeler's camp!" they exclaimed. "We cannot help you, sir." On that early February day Wheeler and Forrest were watching the Cumberland. They found the enemy had grown timid in the use of their boats. Wharton and For-

rest were instructed to provide ammunition. Very inadequate was the supply finally collected.

General Wheeler well appreciated the effect of idleness upon volunteer cavalry. The enemy having withdrawn their boats of all kinds from the river, Wheeler suggested an assault on Dover, the village immediately above Fort Donelson on the right, or south, bank of the Cumberland, which one year before Generals Floyd and Pillow had abandoned and Buckner had surrendered to General Grant. The village itself, independent of the fort, was fortified and garrisoned by an Illinois regiment. Forrest objected to the assault. In the first place, he had not sufficient ammunition. Even if the position was captured, it could not be held for any considerable length of time, isolated as it was from the Confederate lines. The loss of life in the attempt must be considerable. Wheeler replied that from information in his possession the "post could be easily captured."

Renegades among the citizens of the surrounding country communicated to the garrison the approach of the Confederates. Wheeler rode rapidly and drew rein upon an eminence overlooking the village. He sent a flag of truce bearing this demand:

"Having invested Fort Donelson with a force sufficient to take it, and desiring to prevent the effusion of blood, we have the honor to demand an immediate and unconditional surrender of the fort, with all the force, stores, &c. If you surrender, you will be treated as prisoners of war: if not, you must abide the consequences.

"JOS. WHEELER,
"Major-General and Chief of Cavalry;
"N. B. FORREST,
"Brigadier-General;
"J. A. WHARTON,
"Brigadier-General."

Colonel Harding promptly replied: "I decline to surrender the forces under my command or the post, without an effort to defend them."

A soldierly reply was Colonel Harding's. Had Floyd

or Buckner made a like reply from the same spot to Grant just one year before, should the Confederacy have suffered Shiloh or Murfreesboro? Hardly.

So on this 3d day of February, 1863, Wheeler rode forward with Forrest until the latter's brigade was in position. After giving instructions, he galloped back to Wharton. Forrest did not look with hope to the assault. He spoke to his staff, confidentially; he might fall and he wished it to be known that the fight was not his.²

It was two o'clock in the afternoon. The Confederate artillery, from an elevation, commanded the works below and enfiladed two sides. The fight opened, Forrest on one side of the place and Wharton's men on the other, led by Wheeler in person. Hard fighting, errors of direction and repulse distinguished the event. The three generals sat on their horses in consultation in the gathering shades of night. Their small store of ammunition was gone. At eight o'clock the withdrawal began and no attempt at pursuit was made from the fort, although transports had landed 500 fresh troops to reinforce the garrison.

A sergeant of Russell's 4th Alabama, a youth of nineteen years,³ was ordered by General Forrest to ride up the road, in the pitch darkness, to find shelter for headquarters. Several miles away the sergeant found, at the old Yellow Creek furnace, the first roof, an humble single-room shanty. The generals gathered about the wide hearth, where blazed a log fire. Wheeler sat on one side, Wharton on the other, while Forrest lay flat on his back, a turned-down stick chair supporting his head and the heavy boots enclosing his feet, wet, rested on the hearth. Wheeler dictated to his adjutant his report of the day to General Bragg. Forrest sharply called out that his men should receive "justice." "I shall give your men justice, general," was the low-spoken but firm answer.

A scene followed; Forrest raved. "General Wheeler," he exclaimed, "I am your friend; you know I respect you;

²Wyeth's Forrest.

³Samuel L. Robertson.

you may take my sword from me; you may lay me in my grave, but I will never go into battle again under you!"

"I do not want your sword, General Forrest," replied Wheeler imperturbable.⁴ Wheeler once, at a later time of great peril to the army, offered to serve under Forrest for a given purpose, particulars of which we shall relate later, but Forrest never again served under Wheeler.

The next day scouts reported the enemy in heavy force moving to surround the 1000 Confederates. A scout sufficiently large to deceive the enemy was sent toward Charlotte while the main body crossed Duck river, at Centreville, back into army lines.

⁴Robertson's Recollections; Wyeth's Forrest.

CHAPTER VIII

1863

THE STREIGHT RAID

The headquarters of the army were at Tullahoma. The headquarters of Lieutenant-General Polk, commanding the left, were at Shelbyville, to the south, and those of Lieutenant-General Hardee, commanding the right, were at or near Wartrace, to the north. Substantial works were thrown up along the line of infantry, perhaps for thirty miles.

From January 4th to June 30th the two great armies lay inactive, eighteen miles apart. In this long period, however, the cavalry were most industrious. General Wheeler, in spare moments, prepared a work on cavalry tactics that was published, accepted by General Johnston and used at once.

Wheeler, Forrest and Morgan seemed to have ridden at will, while General Rosecrans gravely gave notice to his government: "One rebel cavalryman takes on an average three of our infantry to watch our communications. It is of prime necessity, in every point of view, to meet their cavalry." His own report of his cavalry was 11,478 strong. Besides, he had a large number of horses, fully equipped, in reserve on which to mount infantry.¹ Three weeks later the invading commander telegraphed to Washington: "We always have been without control of the country except a short distance beyond our infantry lines" for want of cavalry. At that very time, when his cavalry did get out beyond his infantry lines foraging, they frequently met and fought the Confederate cavalry for possession of a field of grain.

The service, however, was too tame for Wheeler. He

wrote to General Bragg, giving in detail his project for capturing Louisville, Kentucky, which he said was reported with a small garrison. First, by the use of Morgan's expert telegrapher, Ellsworth, he would tap the wires and by orders from Washington to Rosecrans he would find out the particulars of his plans, whether he would soon advance. If not, Wheeler could be spared with authority to take his cavalry to that city. He would engage to reach his destination in ten days, by the use of boats, and would engage to "bring out great quantities of provisions and other stores," and return in five days' march. General Bragg refused. The risk was excessive.

The next day, from Shelbyville, Lieutenant-General Polk wrote to the chief of cavalry: "Your dispatch of this date is received. It is a pleasant thing to hear from you, as your statements are always so directly to the point. The forward movement reported by Colonel — is so like that made all along my front, on Wednesday and Thursday, that it reminds me of the young bird trying his wings before finally leaving his nest."

The cavalry of Bragg's army was now organized into two corps. Wheeler was assigned to the right wing. His command consisted of the brigades of John H. Morgan, Wharton and Hagan. Van Dorn was assigned to the left wing with headquarters at Spring Hill. His command consisted of the brigades of Forrest, W. H. Jackson and Roddey, the last-named on duty on the border of Alabama and Tennessee. General Wheeler was a much younger man than several of the great soldiers and renowned commanders under him, and it is known that he reluctantly accepted his place. His thorough knowledge of his profession, his untiring energy, perfect valor, the purity of life, and his punctilious courtesy reconciled all to his authority. That promotion had come unsought by him, all knew. On March 11th the general commanding wrote to him congratulating him on the arrival of Brigadier-General Will T. Martin, lately promoted from the rank of major, commanding the Jeff Davis legion of Stuart's cavalry, Army of Northern Virginia. General Martin was a civilian, a lawyer of

Natchez, possessed of the native qualities of a fine soldier. General Bragg spoke of him to Wheeler as an excellent disciplinarian. He was a tall man, of lithe figure, appearing to advantage when mounted. We shall learn much of his prowess in war.

While the infantry rested, month after month, the cavalry was always active. Rosecrans sought to improve the military efficiency of his cavalry and frequently sent out considerable bodies, well supported by his more reliable infantry and artillery, to seek contact with the Confederate advanced posts and foraging parties. This habit did improve the fighting qualities of the invader in that arm.

Indispensable as the Confederate cavalry was to the grand armies to which it was attached, the arm bore a peculiar relation to the civil government. The horsemen were expected to feed themselves and their horses from the country, and to arm and clothe themselves from home and from the enemy's stores. When horses, owned by their riders, fell in battle or were otherwise disabled, the government furnished no substitute. The man dismounted, from any cause, must remount himself or join the infantry. When it is remembered that there would have been no infantry, by choice of the soldiers, it may be understood to what extremity the trooper needing a horse resorted to find one. He entered pastures and stables by force of his necessity. There were military rules for horse impressment, but these did not save the citizen from serious loss and inconvenience.²

Forrest had permitted himself to fall into a furious outbreak of temper in General Van Dorn's quarters and presence, directed at his superior's conduct, offensive to him personally and officially, as he supposed. It was agreed, however, by the two fearless principals to drop the matter, at least for a while. Van Dorn soon started Forrest off on a most momentous expedition, as the sequel proved, and before it was briefly concluded he was murdered in his headquarters at Spring Hill by a citizen of the neighborhood.

Rosecrans strove in the time of his inaction, facing Bragg, to invent a strategy by which to strike the latter's

²Duke's Morgan.

communications with his base of supplies in Georgia and Alabama. To this end he moved some troops from Corinth, Mississippi, into northern Alabama, about Tuscumbia, under General Dodge. Dodge, with infantry and cavalry, was instructed to keep Roddey employed along the country between Tuscumbia and Decatur, while a body of cavalry from Nashville, some 2200 picked men, mounted on active young mules,—mistakenly supposed to be able to endure more hard riding over a rough country than horses,—should go by steamer down the Cumberland, down the Ohio and up the Tennessee to Eastport, Mississippi, near the Alabama line; thence they were to debark for a ride of many days through the hills of northern Alabama to Rome, and farther on, destroying the Confederate arsenal at that point, capturing Chattanooga, also Atlanta, and destroying the railroads that fed Bragg. A citizen of Indiana, Abel D. Streight, then colonel of a regiment under General Rosecrans, conceived this project and was assigned to command the raid.

General Bragg knew nothing of the initial Streight's expedition. He heard of Dodge and ordered Van Dorn to dispatch Forrest with all haste to the scene. Streight landed, as he had planned, at Eastport. His two thousand young mules were all tied in camp. Roddey hovered near. Some of his daring men, knowing all about mules and their peculiarities, slipped through the camp guards, then at a concerted signal began to make strange noises about the feeding places. A few mules began to bray, more joined them until finally all the two thousand took up the note. Finally, as the scouts fired their pistols and whooped louder, there was a general stampede of the animals, whose kind has come in since Noah. Some four hundred fled in fright and two hundred of these were never recovered by the colonel commanding.⁸

Streight did not know Forrest was riding southward very hard, and Forrest did not know Streight was hunting his lost mules and scouring the farms of the valley for fresh mounts. The hard riding of the one and the unsoldierly

⁸Wyeth's Forrest.

delay of the other made possible certain movements of the great hostile armies in Tennessee that enter most interestingly into this narrative and into the martial history of the world.

The night of April 27th the rain fell in torrents at Tusculumbia. For days it had been falling and the red roads were deep in mud and slush. Colonel Streight led his long lines through the darkness, out from the town into the main highway, headed for Moulton, the village capital of Lawrence county, Alabama, some thirty miles due east.

Dodge had already moved out eastward, in accordance with the plan of General Rosecrans, along the roads that ran parallel with the old Tusculumbia and Decatur railroad—Memphis and Charleston—to protect Streight's left flank as he rode for Moulton. Dodge soon struck Forrest, but still Forrest had no knowledge, nor suspicion even, of Streight. Late in the afternoon of the 28th, about twenty hours after Streight had ridden out in the night from Tusculumbia, Forrest was sitting on his horse, with his volunteer staff officer, Captain William S. Bankhead, a Virginian planter of the vicinage, by his side, watching the fighting at Town Creek, a hamlet five miles from Courtland.⁴ At that moment, Mr. James Moon, a citizen of Tusculumbia who had succeeded in eluding the enemy, rode up, saluted the general and broke to him the great news that Streight had already passed to his rear. Streight was then resting at Moulton.

Immediately upon this startling revelation, Forrest called off his men and hurried to Courtland. There he ordered Captain Bankhead to take his wagons out into the near-by mountains by obscure ways, all known to so famous a huntsman as this planter. Without a moment's rest the general distributed ammunition to select men, mounted on select horses, about eleven hundred. Three days' rations were cooked by midnight and shelled corn to carry along was provided.

At one o'clock that morning, April 29th, in a drizzling rain, the marvelous pursuit began. At almost the same

⁴Conversation of Captain Bankhead with the author.

hour Streight, with nearly double the force of the pursuer, rode out from Moulton, sixteen miles from Courtland. The road from Courtland to Moulton ran over mountainous country, a narrow way, cutting its course almost continuously through forest, the soil spongy and now exceedingly wet from a rainy season.

Forrest rested a short time at Moulton. He rode out from the village at sunset the 29th. Before daylight, the 30th, he caught up with Streight in camp, attacked and fought. A day of hot pursuit and skilful escape followed. About nine o'clock on the morning of May 2d, Forrest, at full speed, came upon the Black Creek bridge, afire and impassable. The enemy had just crossed, and their rear guard was throwing shell into the advance columns of the Confederate leader. The banks of the rapid little stream were high and steep. Horses could by no means descend or ascend. The nearest bridge intact was four miles away. The portentous moment had come and all seemed lost to the Confederates. The very life of the young republic hung upon the moment. On the roadside within stone's throw of the burning bridge sat an humble cabin. The widow Sanson lived there with two maiden daughters, their only brother, a youth, a soldier with his musket, far away. Emma, the younger daughter, sixteen years of age, seeing the general's chagrin and dismay, approached to say that, if he would have the family side-saddle put upon a horse, she would guide him to an obscure and difficult ford two hundred yards, perhaps, away. "Jump up behind me; I have no time to saddle a horse!" exclaimed the general, thoroughly aroused.

The ford was passed by ingenious device. The pursuit was resumed. The next day, May 3d, Streight was overtaken, beyond Gadsden, and surrendered his whole command. The pursuit had consumed five days and the distance travelled was one hundred and fifty miles. No improved road was found on the march.

Colonel Streight carried with him as second in command, Colonel Hathaway. Hathaway had sold Kentucky horses and mules to the farmers all along the line of march before

the war, and his knowledge of the country and of the people was highly useful to the expedition. He fell in one of the last of the numerous conflicts of the march.

The achievement of Forrest was most masterly. Its energy of execution was not more extraordinary than the brilliancy with which the pursuit was marked in tactical performance. On the part of the enemy, the expedition was a most daring attempt to accomplish by a few men, comparatively, the aim of a great army.

CHAPTER IX

1863

THE SHELBYVILLE FIGHT

General Bragg did not conceal his anxiety. He wrote to Wheeler: "There is danger of the enemy by such movements as that made on the 21st (Streight's) prosecuted by a little more energy and determination." Wheeler must establish a cordon of posts along the entire front of the army. The instructions were followed industriously. John H. Morgan was sent to the right and his posts extended one hundred and fifty miles, through northern Tennessee into Kentucky. Wheeler himself was very active on the more immediate front of the army. Taking Wharton with him, he went out to strike the Louisville and Nashville railroad, the main line of communication of the enemy with their base. He struck the road nine miles above Nashville, where it ran on the opposite bank of the Cumberland river. Wheeler and Wharton, dismounting and concealing themselves, walked forward to observe the stockades. The command waited in concealment and profound silence two hours. A "mogul" engine came around the curve from Louisville, drawing eighteen cars loaded with horses and beeves. The waiting Confederates turned their battery upon the train, at once crippled the engine and destroyed the cars and many horses and cattle. The guard in the stockades fled.

In connection with this expedition, Lieutenant-Colonel Ferrill was sent to operate in the immediate rear of the enemy, on the Nashville and Murfreesboro railroad. He drew the spikes from cross-ties and placed his men in ambush. A train came heavily loaded with soldiers, even the tops of the cars crowded with them. The rails spread; the wheels of the engine ceased to turn; the ambuscade

opened fire; the soldiers on the car tops rolled off and the cars were emptied instantly. Forty Confederates in captivity, on their way to western military prisons, were released, 150 of General Rosecrans' men captured, the engine and train destroyed and \$30,000 in greenbacks, with a large mail from the camps, seized.

General Rosecrans remained unsatisfied with his cavalry. The very day he gave his consent to Streight's raid he wrote to a subordinate of his cavalry, General Mitchell, in warm terms of congratulation: "Some of your cavalry officers ought to have snap enough to do such things without troubling you to command in person."¹ It is certain no commander of a Confederate army, on any field, ever complained of want of energy in his cavalry. About this time Lieutenant-Colonel James C. Malone, Jr., of the 14th Alabama cavalry, sought the consent of Lieutenant-General Polk to an attempt, by him, to capture General Rosecrans in his headquarters, and all his papers. Polk assented, on condition that the captured general should not be physically injured or unnecessarily humiliated, and to this Malone readily pledged himself. But the attempt was relinquished, with no further consideration.

That war, in its strange experiences to citizen-soldiers, may be understood, we give a letter from the same young captain previously quoted, Miller, of Wheeler's cavalry, written upon release from a military prison, giving the particulars of his capture and confinement.

"IN FRONT OF SHELBYVILLE, TENN.,

"May 13th, 1863.

" Yesterday I had the pleasure of meeting my noble boys, and if a happy reunion is ever enjoyed, that was one. The prodigal and his father could not have been half so interesting. Some embraced me with tears in their eyes, and then a good lusty shout went up on all sides. Finally I

¹Off. War Records.

unceremoniously 'broke ranks,' telling all to wait for particulars, and seizing the much coveted package of your letters, hurried away to the shade in the woods. Heart cannot tell, pen is too feeble to describe, my emotions as I read of your anxiety for me.

A few days after my last letter to you, before capture, I moved with the wagon trains up to the outpost, near Shelbyville. Although very weak and feeble, I was distressed to see one of my lieutenants doing all the duty. Accordingly, on January 30th I rode out to the picket lines near Rover. I remained for the night and next day was called to sit on a board, convened to determine a question of seniority of rank between two captains. While on this duty, firing was heard in front and we immediately mounted and moved out upon the turnpike. We had scarcely done so when our pickets dashed in, closely followed by a brigade of Yankee cavalry. My company received orders to the front, to engage the enemy, but he appearing in very heavy force, the lieutenant-colonel wheeled the column about to retreat to more advantageous ground. This movement threw my company in the rear. The Yankees came on at full speed, the head of our column not moving briskly enough. To make matters worse, several buggies and wagons of citizens met us on the road and blocked the way. I wheeled a part of my company and gave the enemy a shot, but it was too late to check the charge of a whole brigade. Unable to move forward, on account of the buggies and wagons, I drew my pistol and sent its contents into the Yankee ranks as fast as possible. Just as I was extending my arm to fire the sixth time, a stalwart made a cut at my head with his sabre, missed his aim, but struck my elbow, knocking the pistol to the ground and completely paralyzing my arm. I was now surrounded by half a dozen, cutting and shooting at me. Resistance being impossible, I dismounted, one of the enemy at the same time dismounting to pick up my pistol. They followed on after our retreating column. Taking advantage of my opportunity, I drew and broke my fine sword under my foot. I stood unarmed while those rushing by shot at me several times, but I escaped a wound, except the cut on the arm, which was not at all serious.

"The enemy killed one and captured several of our regiment, six officers besides myself. They next proceeded to rob and destroy all they could find in the houses along the road; taking off every piece of meat a poor widow had laid up for winter. We were carried six miles to Eaglesville, where their infantry were in camp, for the night. Here our officers were put on parole of honor to report next morning, the result, to us, being that we got a little supper. Next day, Sunday, February 1st, we were started under heavy guard for Murfreesboro, where we arrived late in the day, having marched nineteen miles behind ambulances loaded with wounded Yankees. Upon reaching M—— we were paraded in front of the court-house, and after being detained until a crowd of Yankees could view us, we were taken inside and examined for arms and Yankee clothing, all of which when found was taken. We were then marched to jail, and crowded in so thick there was no room for a man to lie down, the floor covered with most loathsome filth and dirt. We had passed all day without anything to eat, and now were packed in with deserters and the vilest characters from their own army. We spent a supperless and sleepless night. Next morning we were taken out, without having been fed anything whatever, and again paraded in front of the court-house, where we stood in mud, shoe-mouth deep, until twelve o'clock, when we were crowded into wagons and, under heavy guard of infantry and cavalry, started for Nashville. A heavy snow-storm set in which continued for twelve or fourteen hours. We reached Nashville at ten o'clock that night, where we were kept standing in the cold until some were so benumbed they were unable to walk. We were now crowded into filthy rooms, without a spark of fire, and here spent another hungry and sleepless night. Next day we were paraded about the streets of Nashville and put in the third story of the market-house. There were about one hundred of our wounded taken at the battle of Murfreesboro. The crowd was so dense that the poor wounded were necessarily crushed by the well. At ten o'clock we got some bread and raw bacon

—the first in forty-eight hours. Large, strong men were scarcely able to stand from fasting and fatigue.

"The ladies of Nashville did all in their power to provide something for us to eat, but the brutes would not let them come near us, except under special pass from General Mitchell and but two or three succeeded in obtaining them.

"We remained in Nashville some six days when we were put, sixty, into a box car and sent to Louisville. There we were searched and pocket-knives and money taken away. Then we were ushered into prison, filled with filth and vermin. We were marched through a narrow passageway where sat a dirty negro with a tray, meat on one side and bread on the other. He handed each man a piece of both, as he passed, ordering each in peremptory style to 'shove on.' Shoving on, we marched into a muddy yard or pen, where we stood to eat our allowance. Then we were marched back. Luckily, we were not kept there long.

"The same night we were started for Camp Chase, Columbus, Ohio. On leaving, our money was returned to us, but not our pocket-knives. Only officers were taken to Camp Chase. We had a very good trip, thanks to a sympathizing railroad conductor. He managed to slip in to us some cigars, cakes, etc. We arrived at Camp Chase the evening of the 9th, where we passed another strict and insulting search. I had been taught a lesson and had hid my money in my boot. Into this prison we were ushered, with fair prospect to remain for the war.

"From eighteen to twenty-four men were put in rooms sixteen by eighteen feet. We prepared for a long siege, bought pocket-knives, files, etc., from the sutler and commenced making rings, breastpins and other little trifles from gutta-percha. I soon became expert, and made some nice pieces of jewelry. We were allowed abolition papers, which we got every morning. We were furnished with plenty of good rations here and had stoves to cook on. Here I found several hundred officers, taken at Arkansas Post, among them General Churchill. Besides, there were officers from almost every state in the Confederacy. Here I met several old schoolmates.

"We were treated most shamefully by the officers and men of the prison guards, abused and cursed in vile language. On leaving, April 10th, we were marched out between files of hireling soldiers, while their officers stood by and stripped us of clothing. They stripped us of all underclothing, took away our blankets, our toothbrushes, hair-combs, overcoats, in fact, everything on and about us without rendering our bodies nude. They next rifled our trunks, even taking Bibles and Testaments. They took from me a fine shawl, which had been presented to me by a South Carolina schoolmate, and my blanket, of course. They took a fine work of fiction from my hand.

"Thus stripped, we were marched four miles to Columbus, where we took the cars, via Pittsburg, Harrisburg and Philadelphia. At Philadelphia we took boat and went down the river, thirty miles to Fort Delaware. Here we were crowded into tents, without fire, and were given only one blanket to the man, in the presence of rain and bitter cold. We were fed on sour bread and spoilt beef, which sickened and nauseated us. I was prostrated nearly two weeks and only the greatest care of myself prevented me from dying. One lieutenant from our regiment died here from nothing but exposure and malpractice. The prison was infected with smallpox, and numbers took it and died. In fact, we could not pass to our meals without coming in contact with cases of the disease.

"We remained at Fort Delaware until April 28th, when we took the steamer 'State of Maine' down the bay, passed capes Henlopen and Charles, and anchored in Hampton Roads on the evening of the 30th. On the evening of May 1st we started up James river and laid at City Point until the 4th. There we landed, amidst cheer after cheer, and marched on to Petersburg the same night.

"Such is a hasty outline of three months in Yankeeland. I have omitted many things of interest, but of which I will try and speak hereafter. Thanks to a kind Providence, I am spared to see again my brave boys."

The one railroad conductor, the only human being among many, in ninety days of captivity, to offer a sign of com-

passion! The bodies of men, so hardened by exposure that the utmost brutality inflicted failed to cut the thread of life in some! The usages of civilized war, lost!

The letter continues: "I could not but believe that those prayers offered up for one found acceptance at the throne of mercy, and this belief gave me strength and courage in suffering, and patriotism to bear the insults and vituperation heaped upon me by a set of dastardly hirelings. The Yankee troops who had seen service in the field, treated me as well as I expected of them. Those who treated us worst were the 88th Ohio, who are said to have enlisted on condition that they were to guard two prisons in Ohio and never be ordered to the front. At Camp C— were old men, boys and some ladies from Nashville, all crowded up to die of diseases."

After the battle of Chancellorsville the first days of May of the same year, and the retreat of General Hooker's "grandest army on the planet," the spirit of peace waxed strong among the more wealthy and intelligent classes in the United States. A strong delegation from New England and New York appeared at the White House to advise President Lincoln to propose terms of peace.

The president was profoundly agitated by the inactivity of General Rosecrans. Halleck wrote the general: "If you can do nothing yourself, a portion of your troops must be sent to General Grant,"—then besieging Vicksburg. Again: "You have double, if not treble, the force of Bragg." June 19th a telegram was sent by Halleck to Rosecrans: "I deem it my duty to report to you the great dissatisfaction that is felt here at your inactivity."²

General Rosecrans sent out to the generals of corps and divisions a circular letter calling for answer: "Can this army advance at this time, with strong reasonable chances of fighting a great and successful battle?" Sheridan, Reynolds, Granger, Thomas, Crittenden and Negley answered against advance. Stanley, chief of cavalry, answered: "We must consider what we would do if whipped. The time

²Off. War Records.

has passed when the fate of armies must be staked because the newspapers have no excitement and do not sell well." But Brigadier-General James A. Garfield, chief of staff, wrote at great length in reply to the copy of the circular sent to him. "The turbulent aspect of politics," he said, "must be considered." The season of elections was approaching; Vallandigham, representative from Ohio in Congress, was a candidate for governor of that state on a peace platform. The draft was growing more and more difficult to fill and more precarious of reliance for preserving the army. General Garfield pointed out that Rosecrans then had 87,000 men; Bragg's force he estimated at "58,100." Garfield would move forward and fight a great battle, fearing no consequences, "for the hand of God determines results."

"Our lines are full of spies, admitted by our pickets from Nashville as refugees," Bragg wrote Wheeler, with positive order to stop the practice. Thomas sent Rosecrans the report of his spy, "a man of education and high intelligence," who had travelled leisurely in east Tennessee, Georgia, Alabama and Mississippi. The Confederacy was weak within, he found. The railroads were not all of the same gauge; the rolling-stock was insufficient and the scanty supply was wearing out rapidly; the only rails available for repairing wear of track were the sidings. The gentleman spy found wooden shops erected at Chattanooga for the manufacture of railroad iron and advised that they should be promptly burned.

Beauregard, with masterly skill, held Charleston harbor and a long sea front on either side. The enemy's powerful fleet, ship following ship, had sailed by Fort Sumter, vainly hurling against the walls the heaviest solid shot of the age from the most powerful guns ever invented. The fort was in ruins, but the garrison was yet intact, returning shot for shot as best it could. At Chancellorsville General Lee had excelled himself. Dividing his army,—which was about one-third the strength of Hooker's,—into three parts, he drove back "the finest army on the planet" in utter discomfiture. Pemberton held Vicksburg, encircled on the land

side by Grant's army, supported by Porter's fleet on the river. Lee was preparing to invade Pennsylvania. Stonewall Jackson was in his grave.

It had come to be a standing jest at army headquarters in Washington that General Rosecrans had a spring vegetable garden at Murfreesboro and was waiting there for his lettuce and radishes. But Rosecrans heard the news again, as at Nashville, December, 1862, that Mr. Davis had ordered Breckinridge, with 6,000 men, to go from Bragg to Pemberton. Thereupon he moved forward. One of his more adventurous commanders even got to Decherd, on Bragg's left rear, whence Forrest drove him. Hardee would fight "somewhere at the foot of the Cumberland range." Polk, no less earnestly advised retreat. The commanding general ordered the army in line of battle, but as the formation was nearly complete, he called the troops back. He listened now to Polk: "Fall back immediately. If we delay and are compelled to cross the river at Decatur, into the hills of northern Alabama, no supplies can be had there and the army must disperse in small detachments to live." No railroad then connected any point in that region with the great plantations of central Alabama.

Rosecrans advanced with misgivings. Bragg, as usual, dispatched Wheeler to the rear of the enemy, with orders to destroy his trains, drive in his foragers and break up his depots of supplies. "It rained twenty hours out of twenty-four for four days," wrote a trooper. Wheeler rode steadily, now on the flank, then on the rear of the invading host. On June 22d, 23d, 24th he fought on the Shelbyville pike, at Middletown, Unionville, Rover and Eagleville.³

These engagements showed conclusively that Rosecrans was advancing and that the terrible roads delayed him. Indeed, he was not making even five miles a day. Crittenden led, his objective being Hardee, but even his energy could only move his corps twenty-seven miles in three days of greatest exertion. Martin's division, perhaps 1500 strong, had now ridden down to Spring Hill, where Forrest was. General Wheeler rode thither to see them and left

³Dodson's Campaigns of Wheeler.

orders that both should join him at once at Shelbyville. He then rode rapidly to General Bragg to report the enemy's advance. Polk was ordered out of Shelbyville. He took the road for the Tennessee river, with his trains following, for Wheeler to protect. On the forenoon of June 27th the last wagon crossed the wooden bridge over Duck river, on the eastern suburb of the town, then a raging flood.

Martin had gone to Forrest at Spring Hill by order of General Bragg, in apprehension that Rosecrans would divide his great army, sending a part to strike the Tennessee behind the Confederate command, then, marching up-stream, cut off his retreat. Wheeler discovered the error of this calculation, and then ordered the evacuation of Spring Hill and the junction of Forrest and Martin with him at Shelbyville.

Stanley, chief of cavalry, with about 13,000 troopers, supported by Gordon Granger's infantry of 3000, set out to overtake Polk at Shelbyville in the ordinary confusion of the occasion. Wheeler's purpose was to interpose between Polk's train and this movement of the foe.

After seeing General Bragg, he reached Polk's old breast-works, three or four miles west of the town, about eleven o'clock in the morning and there took command of his troops behind them. Martin had spent the night in bivouac where he could feed his horses. It rained all night. Word was sent to him to hasten on. Just before noon he came up in a drenching rain, every man soaked to the skin and nine out of ten rifles too wet to shoot. Forrest was on the road behind advancing.

Colonel James D. Webb, of the 51st Alabama, one of Martin's favorite regiments, sent Major Dyke with seven men forward upon an eminence commanding a view of the pike.⁴ This scout reported that, as far as the eye could reach, the broad white pike was filled with the mounted men and artillery of the foe, advancing steadily and confidently.

⁴Major Dyke's letter to the author.

The fight began; Martin had slept on the ground, in the rain, the night before; he took position in drenching rain; "not one gun in ten would fire." Russell's 4th Alabama fought bravely. The 51st Alabama was driven in toward Shelbyville, some three miles, Major Dyke and many others being captured. The whole cavalry line fell back in confusion. They were a mere handful.

Wheeler fell back to the town, or was driven back. Would Forrest ever come! He had 3000 brave men at his command. Forrest had already turned to the rear, and, knowing his wagons had passed over the bridge, he sought another several miles higher up-stream.

Wheeler formed his men, perhaps 600 of them, on the court-house square. Up the street the enemy formed for the charge, thousands of them. Men, women and children crowded the doors and windows, waving the stars and stripes and shouting welcome to the foe. As was his custom, Wheeler rode to the head of his column. As the serried ranks of the innumerable foe advanced, he cried, "Charge!" The impact was terrific. Two guns he had planted on the street sent shells fiercely into the advancing enemy, but the missing places in their ranks were at once filled. The fighting was hand to hand, with clubbed pistols and clubbed carbines. Wheeler rode here and there on the front. "Kill him!" "Shoot him!" "That's Wheeler!" rang out from the lips of mad invaders. Wounded horses neighed, unhorsed riders were ridden down on every side, the red sun sank upon the scene of carnage.

Thirteen thousand to six hundred. "Every man for himself!" shouted Wheeler. Then there came a wild rush for the bridge, the one narrow bridge: alas, a broken wagon blocked it. The routed horsemen spurred their chargers to leap into the raging stream. The enemy opened a rattling fire upon them from the land. Captain N. D. Johnson, of the 51st Alabama, seeing General Wheeler and Martin hotly pursued, halted a considerable number of men and checked the pursuers. Sergeant Phil Duncan, of Captain George Knox Miller's company, 8th Confederate regiment, saved Martin's life, no doubt, by

knocking from his horse one of the pursuing troopers. Martin was slightly wounded. Wheeler and Martin both reached the river bank. The former struck it where it was perhaps fifteen feet above the water. He spurred his horse to the leap, lost his seat in the descent, but, clinging to the neck of the animal, guided him, swimming, to the opposite bank in safety. Martin trotted down an easier incline to the water. His horse struck the steep place on the opposite side and with great difficulty ascended lower down. Captain Johnson's horse was washed down stream to the pillars of the bridge, where he was captured by soldiers standing on the floor of the structure and held for nearly two years a captive. While all this was going on Captain Miller and other officers gathered some men who had crossed safely, formed them on the east bank of the river and fired on the enemy on the opposite side.

Darkness now covered the earth. War abounds in lost opportunities. Polk's undefended train was not more than five miles off on the road, travelling at snail's pace. General Stanley might have captured the whole. Granger begged him to pursue that night, but beyond posting a small guard at the east end of the bridge he did nothing.

All that night Wheeler labored to bring together his broken regiments. Bragg hurried to him 500 Georgia and Tennessee cavalry that had not been engaged. At dawn, as the enemy crossed the bridge now cleared, he met, fought them and drove them back in confusion to the water's edge.

As General Bragg now abandoned Tennessee and his campaign of defense was closed, the result was startling. Tennessee was lost: Mississippi was lost; General J. E. Johnston was vindicated, at fearful cost.

Bragg was not slow to see that his army was heavily indebted to the cavalry. Wheeler, Forrest and John H. Morgan, with 2000 to 4000 men under each, had given the Murfreesboro campaign a distinct and decisive support. Forrest, by his marvelous feat in the capture of Streight, had saved Bragg from impending disaster at Tullahoma. The part of the cavalry in this crisis was marked by yet another wonderful feat, paralleled by nothing in the

history of that arm of the service, except within the Confederate army; of this we shall speak presently.⁵

⁵The circumstances preceding the Shelbyville fight, above related, are taken for the most from Dodson's Wheeler and His Cavalry. The facts of the fight in the town and the escape of Wheeler and Martin are from personal letters to the author from the commissioned officers named, who were participants from first to last. An incident of the day will give an idea of the desperate straits of the soldier. Russell's 4th Alabama cavalry was engaged. In the falling back from the breastworks to the town, a commissioned officer and a youth, since known as an eminent surgeon of New York, John Allen Wyeth, were separated from that command. Seeing their capture imminent, they dashed off together through the woods, in a northerly direction. Wyeth had just lost his superb black mare, brought from home, and was now poorly mounted. A heavy rail fence suddenly loomed up across their course of escape. To halt and throw it down was out of the question. Plunging the spurs home, both horses were urged to take the fence. The officer's horse made it; Wyeth's horse struck heavily. Rider, horse and rails fell in a lump. The officer continued on his run. Wyeth rose, unobserved, and proceeding, reached his regiment in a day or two.

CHAPTER X

1863

EVACUATION OF TENNESSEE

After six months' inaction, except with cavalry, General Bragg mounted his horse at noon, July 1st, at Tullahoma, to follow the retreat of his army. General Lee on that day opened the three days' fighting at Gettysburg. General Johnston had then completed his hasty organization of an improvised force and was ready to obey improvident orders from Richmond to move from Jackson, Mississippi, upon Grant's rear at Vicksburg. Before the week closed Lee was in retreat, Johnston in retreat, Bragg had put the Tennessee between him and his pursuer, Pemberton had surrendered a splendid army, sacrificed in defense of the useless post of Vicksburg.

Rosecrans, at his leisure, moved his 87,000 western men, with no negroes, forward on the road to Atlanta. The government at Richmond made no complaint, was conscious of the presence of no ill omen, except that it scorned and derided the conduct of Johnston.

The general military situation represented the original habit of war, as directed from Richmond—to rush an inferior defensive force across the land to meet the superior force, fight a bloody battle and retreat.

General Johnston was not pleased with the conduct of the war in his department. In the early months of the year he was ordered from Mississippi, where he had gone the December before with the president, in obedience to his order, back to General Bragg's army to take command while Bragg should go to Richmond to confer with the president. The enforced absence from Mississippi distressed him. Arrived at Tullahoma, he found General Bragg absent at Winchester, in attendance upon the sick-

bed of his wife. Bragg, therefore, was not ordered to Richmond. The common word in high army circles was that when Bragg should once reach Richmond he would be promoted and retained there as chief of staff to the president, leaving Johnston in command of the Army of Tennessee; and that Bragg earnestly besought Johnston not to encourage such a change in his assignment. He had blundered disastrously in Kentucky, had failed at Murfreesboro, and he would be crushed should he be relieved of his army at Tullahoma. It would kill his wife, already ill, staff officers said.

When Johnston arrived at Jackson, no troops for him had been assembled from Charleston, South Carolina, or other points whence they ultimately came. Pemberton had marched out of Vicksburg to meet Grant in the open field. After one or two collisions of Grant and Pemberton, without success for the latter, Johnston expressly ordered Pemberton not to return to Vicksburg to stand a siege. The post was indefensible. It had been proven that the land batteries on the bluff could not prevent the navigation of the river. The garrison could not be fed or reinforced from the water side, where Porter's fleet rested, nor from the land side, without cutting through Grant's line of circumvallation, if once established. So Pemberton was ordered to march east, after his abortive battle of Baker's Creek. Johnston would join him. Instead of dispatching the written order by courier, as he did, Johnston would have ridden to Pemberton and taken command in person, but he had not yet regained his normal strength from the desperate wound received at Seven Pines. He was also, at the time, a victim of a wasting diarrhoea which so enfeebled him physically that he was unable to take the long and hot ride. He did start out, however, in a carriage, but the progress over heavy roads was so slow that he heard of Pemberton's retreat into Vicksburg on the way. The government, unknown to him, had telegraphed Pemberton, countermanding his (Johnston's) orders and justifying the fatal blunder of standing siege in Vicksburg.

Wheeler and Forrest faithfully protected the rear of the

retreat from Tullahoma to Bridgeport. An incident of the great war now commands attention. The conduct of a small detachment from Russell's 4th Alabama cavalry, Wheeler's corps, is of prime interest. The men had been in hard work for a week, without leisure to change their clothing. The rains had been almost ceaseless. On July 2d the regiment crossed Elk river at Morris's ford. Some hundred yards beyond it was halted, saddles removed, horses tied and fed and the men allowed to wash their undershirts. An order came hurriedly, "Fall into ranks!" A detail was hurried back, afoot, to the ford. Approaching the place, the detail was divided, the greater number posted on the right or east side of the wagon road, and on the bank of the river, concealed partially by a growth of weeds and scrubby oaks. The lesser division, composed of sixteen men, was posted on the left side of the road near the bank. A wash-out was found there, a gully long enough to hold the sixteen men and about as deep as their armpits. Into this fortunate gully the sixteen men dropped. Presently a brigade of the enemy approached, infantry with two field-guns. They expected to cross but never did, that day. The head of the approaching column was fired upon by the Confederates from the east side of the river, as explained. The invading column halted and formed line of battle, the infantry, on either side of the road, in the woods and the two guns in the middle of the road. A rapid and terrific fire was opened instantly by the whole brigade of infantry, while the two guns in the road threw shell as fast as they could be loaded and fired. The dismounted Confederate cavalry on the east side of the road were driven away, as they had no protection. But the sixteen men occupying the gully continued firing from their position. As the enemy approached the ford, their file-leaders were shot down with unerring aim. Time after time the attempt to cross was thus defeated. Meantime, the firing from the infantry in the woods and from the two pieces of artillery in the road was terrific and persistent. The air was filled with whizzing bullets and bursting shells. For three hours the strange combat proceeded—

sixteen men against a brigade and two guns, and two of the sixteen were now dead! The foe threw out the white flag, sending an invitation to a parley. The flag was received, the talk began, but suddenly the flag was recalled, and all bluecoats rushed for their own lines. A Confederate battery, on the march, having heard the noise of battle at the ford, dashed back, and galloping into position on the brow of the hill above the men in the gully was preparing for action when discovered by the foe on the other side of the ford.¹

Polk's corps crossed the Tennessee at Bridgeport by the railroad bridge and burned it after them; Hardee's corps crossed by boats lower down. The cavalry crossed at different points and picketed the bank down to Decatur. Bragg marched the twenty miles to Chattanooga and occupied the town.

General Rosecrans made no immediate movement to cross the river in pursuit, nor did he seriously shell Chattanooga from the opposite bank, as he might have done. He distributed his army, at convenient points, from Decatur to McMinnville, on the north side of the river, while in person he returned to Nashville to prepare for his campaign.

On December 26th, 1862, he started out from Nashville for Atlanta and was met by Bragg at Murfreesboro. September 1st, 1863, Atlanta fell into the hands of the army he commanded at the outset. We shall follow the terrible story to the end.

General Sheridan, at Decherd, came in possession of valuable maps and data, stolen from General Bragg's headquarters by a deserter, a young lieutenant. The depredations of the invader upon farms along the march were extreme. General Garfield, chief of staff, warned Major-General Thomas of "the outrages on citizens by thieving and robbery"; Major-General McCook warned his subordinate, Brigadier-General P. H. Sheridan, that "disloyalty does not forfeit the rights of humanity."

¹Unpublished Diary of John A. Wyeth, M. D., one of the sixteen. a youth.

General Burnside, after repeated positive orders from Washington, initiating with President Lincoln, moved his army from Ohio and Kentucky to Knoxville.

General Hardee was transferred from the Army of Tennessee to Mississippi and General D. H. Hill was sent from Virginia to take his place, with the temporary rank of lieutenant-general.

After Gettysburg, General Lee returned unmolested to Virginia.

General Wheeler received orders to examine the country south of Chattanooga and suggest a disposition of troops to protect communications with Rome and Atlanta. Indicating the military mind, the energy and capacity for details, of the chief of cavalry, his report becomes interesting:

“HEADQUARTERS CAVALRY CORPS,
“Chattanooga, Tenn., July 19, 1863.

“General W W Makall, Chief of Staff:

“General: I have the honor to state that to keep open the railroad in the state of Georgia and protect the public works at Rome and Atlanta, I would recommend that a stockade be built at the several bridges between Chattanooga and Atlanta, and between Atlanta and West Point and Columbus. These stockades should be garrisoned by forces varying from 20 to 100 men, according to the size and importance of the bridges they are to defend. The more important stockades should, in addition, have a piece of artillery to aid in their defense. These stockades could be garrisoned by state troops and non-conscripts or men unfit for field service. Timber for temporary trestle bridges should be selected, cut and squared, and left in the woods convenient to the bridges. The railroad companies might be required to do this work. At Rome and Atlanta rifle-pits should be thrown up and one or more stockades built on commanding points. A few pieces of artillery should be put in these stockades, or redoubts, inferior artillery would answer. The moral effect of

artillery in position would be very beneficial in deterring raids. Troops could be organized for local defense at Rome and Atlanta, which could be reinforced in time of need from state troops or troops from the army. The stockades referred to on the railroads could likewise be reinforced in case of emergency. With these defenses and one division of cavalry at Gadsden, Alabama, and another at Rome and Calhoun, Georgia, promptly to follow up raids from the enemy, Georgia would be quite secure from the cavalry of General Rosecrans' army.

"Respectfully, general, your obedient servant,

"JOS. WHEELER,
"Major-General."²

General Wheeler solicited authority to remount those of his men who had lost their horses in the service by impressment from citizens; also for authority to increase his force by enlistment of "owners of twenty slaves" and upwards, and their overseers, exempt from military duty under the conscript law on the assumption of the law that they were doing better service at home, producing corn for the army. General Bragg preferred not to evade the civil law.

In compliance with the suggestion of the letter, General Martin was ordered to Gadsden with his division. Lieutenant-Colonel J. S. Prather, in command of the 8th Confederate regiment, was sent to picket the Tennessee between Gunter's Landing and Decatur, to destroy the boats of the enemy, impress corn and wagons to haul it from the north side of the stream and to arrest stragglers and deserters. Colonel John T. Morgan recommended that the division be stationed at Alexandria, Calhoun county, because he felt quite sure "a thousand recruits" could be drawn from the surrounding country.

From his headquarters at Chattanooga, under date July 21st, 1863, General Bragg wrote the following significant letter to his personal friend and fellow citizen of Louisiana, General Beauregard, who was at that time in command at Charleston:

²Off. War Records.

"My dear General:

"Accept my thanks for the copy of your letter (May 15) to our friend (Gen. J. E.) Johnston and your endorsement of 7th inst. Our views in regard to what ought to have been done in this country are identical. Failing to impress the idea (the invasive policy and concentration) on them who control, I was put strictly on the defensive and have struggled with insufficient force until at length depleted so far that safety compelled me to fall back.

"Rosecrans refused to give me battle except on his own terms, and those I would not accept. Unable to carry out my own views of pushing the campaign in Tennessee, and feeling the weakness of our dispersion, I fell back to this line July 1st and reported for orders. Twice since have I reported, no enemy following, and asked for orders for this army. No response; and yet Johnston (in central Mississippi), within five days of me, is falling back, day by day yielding ground we cannot recover and without which we cannot survive. By this time this whole army could have been in Mississippi and a victory won. As it is, we may be expected to be destroyed, in detail. What a sad result to affairs at Vicksburg and Port Hudson! An army closed in, besieged and starved in the midst of abundance. Several times I tried to impress the idea of your arrangements of last year, but to no effect. Fortified places, I felt sure, were to be held by small garrisons and large armies held for the field, but the rule is reversed. An army is backed up against a river by a force it cannot fight, and in a place from which it cannot escape.

"These things are too sad to dwell on. May God protect and defend you in your trials.

"Very truly yours,

"BRAXTON BRAGG."³

Lieutenant-General Polk wrote five days later to the president, and also to Lieutenant-General Hardee in Mississippi, in anxious mood, "This is the important army of the Confederacy," he said. "It has a higher mission

³Off. War Records.

and, properly strengthened and well handled, it will be found to have accomplished more than any other in effecting the great result after which we are all aiming."⁴

Forrest, watching Burnside at Knoxville, chafed under the manifest want of cohesion in the military situation. From his headquarters at Kingston, Tennessee, August 9th, 1863, he wrote direct to Adjutant-General Cooper at Richmond. He had heard from numerous acquaintances among the cotton planters along the Mississippi that thousands of young men in Mississippi, in west Tennessee, in Arkansas, and in Kentucky would flock to him if he could bring a small force to operate upon the steamboats plying the river and feeding Grant's army. He proposed to go thither. He knew all the citizens along the river. He would ask for a nucleus of 400 selected men from his own force, men who knew all the swamps and the roads. He was well persuaded in his own mind that he could increase his strength to "10,000, or even 20,000" and destroy the navigation of the Mississippi, so essential both to Grant and Rosecrans.

The suggestion was military and characteristic; the neglect of it was consistent with the lack of appreciation with which the government received military suggestions from any and every source.

In less than ninety days after General Forrest made his formal request to the adjutant-general, a special messenger of the government, sent across the Mississippi, made the following report:

"SHREVEPORT, LA., Nov. 18, 1863.

"His Excellency, Jefferson Davis,

"President, etc.:

"Dear Sir:—We arrived here yesterday, having been delayed some time on the other side of the Mississippi river by the representations made by the scouts upon duty on the river, and after a full examination of the difficulties and the facilities for crossing, have no hesitation in saying that arms and ordnance stores, mails and money, in any

⁴Off. War Records.

reasonable quantity, can be crossed into this department without difficulty.

"The gunboats, stationed at intervals of ten or fifteen miles, are small stern-wheel, light-draught boats, entirely vulnerable to light artillery.

"When I passed over, there was not on both banks of the river, nor within twenty miles of either side, from Natchez to Vicksburg, twenty-five Confederate soldiers on duty.

"At the present stage of water, iron-clad gunboats cannot navigate the river, and they have no men to spare for extensive raids. An efficient regiment of mounted infantry, and ten or twelve pieces of light artillery on each side, would not only prevent the navigation of the river, but would render the passage as safe as before the fall of Vicksburg.

"The opinion prevalent among the planters is, that no capture had been made, except when the greatest imprudence was manifested, the officers and agents in charge speaking too freely of their business, which was transmitted to the enemy by negroes or some disloyal citizens. Of the latter class there are but few, and the conduct of the citizens generally, is bold, defiant and fearless.

"All communication with the gunboats should be stopped, for the negroes generally are spies.

"Public opinion is not so buoyant on this side as the other. I hope shortly its elasticity will be recovered, as favorable change is now taking place.

"General Smith will have the river on this side thoroughly protected in a few days, and when intercourse is reëstablished it will have the happiest effect.

"Believe me to be, yours most respectfully and sincerely,
"J. N. WAUL."⁶

⁶Off. War. Records, Serial No. 42, p. 425.

CHAPTER XI

1863

THE CHICKAMAUGA CAMPAIGN

Again President Lincoln grew anxious and indignant. General Rosecrans received a telegram of peremptory command on August 5th, a month after Bragg crossed the Tennessee, to follow and to report every day, by telegraph, his progress. The fall elections in the northwest were near. Captain J. M. Cutts, of the Department of Ohio, wrote, in cipher, direct to the president. Captain Cutts said: "We are on the eve of great events. We are threatened with mobs and riots and bloodshed throughout our entire western country. Order 38 has kindled the fires of hatred and contention and Burnside is foolishly and unwisely excited, and if continued in command will disgrace himself, you and the country, as he did at Fredericksburg."

"Order 38" was issued to effect military control of the approaching elections for representatives in Congress and for state officers. Under its provisions, "one commissioned officer, discreet, well-posted and firm, with ten men," should attend every voting poll in General Burnside's department. It was the duty of the officer to see that no candidate should receive support at the ballot box "who is not avowedly and unconditionally for the Union and the suppression of the rebellion."¹

The meaning of the order was, the war party wished to defeat the presidential aspirations of General McClellan, then proposed by the Democrats on the proposition that "the war is a failure," and to defeat Vallandigham, a candidate for governor of Ohio, on the same platform. A similar plan for military control of the elections through-

¹Off. War Records.

out the United States prevailed. The "copperheads" of all the upper Mississippi valley states were aglow with excitement against the drafts for the army. General Rosecrans reported to Washington that the copperheads were 400,000 strong in these states. Lincoln's biographers, Nicolay and Hay, admit they were 350,000.

The enemy were scattered through the hills and valley. Crittenden, occupying Sequatchie valley, threw shell into Chattanooga.

President Lincoln, with remarkable military foresight, had urged the occupation of Chattanooga upon his generals immediately after the evacuation of Corinth by Beauregard the year before. In compliance with his views, Buell had started from Nashville for that purpose, as we have seen, when Bragg's arrival at the same objective, on his way to Kentucky, and Forrest's previous capture of Murfreesboro on his line of march, disappointed him. "To take and hold the railroad at or east of Cleveland, in east Tennessee, is fully as important as the taking and holding of Richmond," he wrote, and never ceased to insist upon. Thus, while Bragg entered Chattanooga, Burnside was hurried from Cincinnati and Kentucky, with 25,000 troops. General Buckner, with his garrison of 5000, evacuated Knoxville and reinforced Bragg.

August 30th, weeks after Bragg, McCook's corps crossed the Tennessee at Caperton's ferry, some thirty-five miles below Chattanooga, followed by Thomas. Crittenden crossed and Rosecrans began to scatter his three corps among the valleys and coves. He had no suspicion of Bragg's purpose to fight.

All unaware to General Rosecrans, the government at Richmond, weeks before, had ordered two divisions of Longstreet's corps from the Army of Northern Virginia, Hood's and McLaws's with Alexander's battalion of artillery, to reinforce Bragg. The movement was fixed to begin September 1st, but the paucity of cars and the unsafe condition of the tracks prevented the completion of other uses of the railroad in time. The transfer of this corps

seems to have been determined upon from a suggestion of Lieutenant-General Longstreet. Lee had gone to Richmond, leaving Longstreet in command. From the capital he wrote to his lieutenant to "prepare to bring General Meade out and use our efforts to crush his army in its present condition." Longstreet replied: "If we could hold the defensive here with two corps, and send the other to operate in Tennessee, I think we could accomplish more than by an advance here."² General Lee at once acquiesced. Effort was made to suppress news of the intended transfer, but not successfully. When Alexander's splendid artillery reached Augusta, it was discovered that the gauge of the railroad was changed. The cars were all crowded with the infantry, so the commander placed his guns on the highways, to make slow progress toward the field they never reached. Nor did McLaws do better.

Just as the welcomed reinforcements were taking the cars in Virginia, Bragg moved out of Chattanooga and Rosecrans moved into the town. The enemy disposed his corps, or dispersed them, under the misdirections of the reports brought to him that the Confederates in utter demoralization, were struggling to retreat down the railroad as speedily as circumstances permitted.³

The unsoldierly positions of the several corps of General Rosecrans on September 11th were as follows: Gordon Granger was at Chattanooga, with the reserve, perhaps 20,000 strong. Three detachments, constituting the remainder of his movable army, were sent out in the general direction where Bragg lay, one under Thomas, another under Crittenden and the third under McCook. The three were not sent together, nor even within supporting distance of one another; nor was the reserve at Chattanooga in reach of any one detachment in case of emergency. If General Rosecrans for a moment supposed he was in the presence of an enemy willing or capable, he should have been cashiered. Jackson or Forrest, on his front, would have destroyed him piecemeal and utterly.

²From Manassas to Appomattox.

³Cleburne and His Command.

On this 11th day of September Crittenden was at Ringgold, McCook was at Alpine, and Thomas, with 12,000 men, was in the valley known as "McLemore's Cove," six miles wide, hemmed in by precipitous mountains. A part of Crittenden's force was fifteen miles from Thomas, the other twenty miles; McCook was ten miles from Thomas. Granger, with the reserves, was entirely out of the situation.

General Bragg was in easy reach of Thomas, his entire army well in hand and in the best of spirits. Did he fight? No. He sent Hindman into the mouth of McLemore's Cove at daybreak the 11th, with 23,000 men; Buckner second in command. He sent Cleburne and Breckinridge to the other end of the cove, to the rear and right of Thomas, who was drawn up in battle order across the narrow valley. There was no possible escape for Thomas except through one or two narrow defiles leading to the summit of Lookout Mountain. If pressed, his escape through these was wholly impossible. General Bragg took position in person, at an early hour, on an eminence overlooking Thomas and his army. He dismounted and waited to see the expected battle. Waiting in vain, he paced the ground under him, to and fro, in nervous excitement. He dug his spurs into the ground in his agitation. The life of the Confederacy hung in the balance!

Why did the battle not open? No one knew then and no one knows yet. Hindman was arrested. He displayed his orders. They left it to his discretion to destroy Thomas. Why he did not destroy Thomas he did not explain. Not a gun was fired. Cleburne and Breckinridge waited all day, from before daylight, to do their part. Bragg was with them. Thomas, late in the afternoon, discovering the trap laid for him, in orderly manner took one of the defiles, marched to the summit of Lookout and laughed at his foe. As the rear of his column was entering the defile, Hindman made a farce of attacking it with a part of his right wing. ⁴

Why did not General Bragg ride full speed to Hindman when he discovered the delay in bringing on the battle?

⁴Cleburne and His Command, p. 118.

He was in easy reach. He was quite as near to the column he expected to be put into action as Johnston and Beauregard were to their left wing at Manassas, to which they rode together as rapidly as their horses could carry them at the critical hour. He saw Shiloh won by Albert Sidney Johnston riding to the front. General Bragg was a brave man. If he had ridden to Hindman as he rode to Polk in delay at Perryville, and led into McLemore's Cove as he led on the Kentucky field, the whole of Rosecrans' army would have been destroyed piecemeal, or scattered in rout.

General Bragg, impatient and yet without word from Hindman, ordered Cleburne's and Breckinridge's divisions, under Lieutenant-General D. H. Hill, to engage the enemy about noon, but countermanded the order, hopeful yet that Hindman would open the battle on the original plan. An hour before sunset these troops were again ordered out, but Thomas had so nearly escaped that the fighting amounted to little.

Two days later, September 13th, Lieutenant-General Polk was ordered to attack Crittenden, but failed to act.

In all the time of the maneuvering of the rival armies, Wheeler and his cavalry, on the Confederate left, guarded that flank for ninety miles southward, while Forrest, with about the same number of men, between three and four thousand, rode through the country toward Knoxville to keep watch there against any movement of Burnside from that direction. Rosecrans had Stanley out, meeting Wheeler with cavalry.

General Rosecrans at once saw the peril of his disconnected detachments, and hearing of Longstreet's approach to reinforce Bragg, bent his energies to unite his whole army. Marching by day and night, he formed his line, about eleven miles long, on Thursday night, the 17th. Bragg was well informed and that night issued orders to open the fight at sunrise the next morning, the 18th, striking the Confederate right upon the enemy's left to drive his line away from his base, Chattanooga. Bragg's army, though full of spirit, had some difficulties to encounter in the weighty matter of organization. Breckinridge, with

5000 men, had been off since June on the Mississippi and had just returned. Hardee, the most accomplished of his corps commanders, had been sent to far-away Mississippi and Alabama, where there was no fighting, to reorganize the troops surrendered and paroled at Vicksburg. Buckner had just arrived with his 5000 from Knoxville.

On Friday, the 18th, Hood's division, one of the two of Longstreet's corps sent to Bragg, arrived. The other, under McLaws, reached the field from the cars as late as Monday 21st, when the battle was over. Hood came with one arm yet in a sling, from Gettysburg. Forcing his tall roan to leap from the car to the ground, he reported to General Bragg at once, receiving a welcome more than ordinarily cordial from that undemonstrative commander. The fighting opened next morning, the 19th, with Hood well engaged.

Thomas arrived at army headquarters about dawn, on Saturday 19th, from an all-night march. Promptly he engaged a small force from Bragg that had been thrown across the Chickamauga at Reed's bridge, burning the bridge behind them. The fighting thus forced by the enemy prevailed all day, not continuously but at intervals, by detachments. It was very severe on the part of the Confederates, however. The failure to initiate by Bragg on the 18th, as he had planned, gave the enemy time to align his troops and fortify. A captain of an Alabama company, A. T. Goodwyn, carried forty-eight men into action, in one of the desultory fights of the day, and lost twenty-seven of the number. Hood was hotly engaged and well satisfied. About dusk he rode to army headquarters in the woods. Several officers near by advanced to greet him. He expressed satisfaction with the result on his part of the field, exclaiming: "To-morrow we shall win a great victory!" General Breckinridge, seated at the foot of a tree, upon hearing this sprang to his feet, clasped the speaker in his arms and cried: "Do you think so, Hood? God grant it may be true!" A tone of doubt lingered with the echo. In the night, Saturday, General Longstreet left the train, and at the risk of capture, made his way to army

headquarters with difficulty. General Bragg spread the maps before him and informed him that the battle would open next day at daylight. He also informed him that his line would be commanded on the right by Polk and on the left by himself (Longstreet). D. H. Hill, successor to Hardee, with Cleburne's and Breckinridge's divisions under him, comprised Polk's extreme right and therefore the extreme right of the army. Hill was to open the battle, the hour daylight. The action was to be taken up, from right to left, through the whole line. Besides the want of thorough confidence in itself, caused by the hasty combination just explained, the army was more or less confused by the sudden determination of the commanding general, at midnight Saturday, to reorganize it. But Polk, having received the order to open the battle at daylight, after an all-night effort, failed to find General Hill, to whom it was to be extended.

Bragg, at headquarters, hearing no sound of battle, rode toward his right. At about eight o'clock he found General Polk at a farmhouse on the road. Pausing there for a moment, the lieutenant-general explained that he had ridden to the left wing at an early hour, but did not find the troops ready for action; that as soon as he partook of breakfast, then being prepared, he would return thither. Bragg rode on and, finding General Hill in position, asked for an explanation, why the battle had not been joined, as ordered, at daylight. Hill assured him of his ignorance of such an order; that even then he did not know which side was expected to open.

At nine-thirty Breckinridge fired the first gun and moved rapidly upon a line of breastworks and abattis, behind which rested an unseen foe that poured into his ranks a most terrific fire of the deadly small arms at close range. These works had been strengthened while the Confederates dallied. At nine-forty-five Cleburne followed. The enemy had had all day of the 18th and all night of the 19th to prepare. The slaughter was awe-inspiring. It was Thomas they were fighting.

Longstreet took up the battle about noon. From Breck-

inridge's first gun until perhaps two o'clock there was not a moment's interval of conflict. The roar of arms was incessant.⁵ The field was nearly all wooded, so that the Confederates were greatly hindered in the use of their artillery. The enemy, having chosen his ground, and erected log breastworks, protected by heavy abattis, had the inevitable advantage in the use of his artillery.

The failure of Polk to open the day with the first rays of light was disastrous to his wing. All night, and in the hours of early morning, the waiting Confederates heard the ring of the axes that were building works and obstructing the approaches behind which rested the brave foe they must assault.

Charles A. Dana, assistant secretary of war, had been with the armies of the United States for several months, by order of President Lincoln, to report direct to him the things that he saw. Dana rode with General Rosecrans the morning of the battle. He was beside the general commanding about noon, on his right wing, when the latter became excited at the failure of some of his subordinates to place brigades and divisions in positions ordered. Enough of these troops were hurried to Thomas, to resist Polk, to weaken the enemy's right wing, so that Longstreet, after two or three hours' heavy fighting, found a gap into which he rushed. Mr. Dana, much fatigued, had dismounted and thrown himself on the forest leaves to rest. He was awakened suddenly by strange noises. Near by sat General Rosecrans on his horse, crossing himself, as devout Catholics are wont to do. Mounting in haste, the messenger of Mr. Lincoln found the road choked with the flying troops of McCook and Crittenden. There was mad rush of fugitives. Horses were cut from gun-carriages and caissons, to aid the flight of the terror-stricken artillerymen, pressed by Longstreet. Infantrymen who had not thrown away their arms in joining the mob now with fixed bayonets resisted the efforts of their officers to stay the rout.⁶

⁵Jones' pamphlet, History of the Eighteenth Alabama Infantry.

⁶Dana's Diary.

General Wheeler dismounted some of his cavalry and fought on Longstreet's left with fine effect.

After Longstreet had put to rout the enemy's right wing, he called earnestly for cavalry, but Wheeler was fully occupied, as we shall see. General Bragg, in the rear, sent for Longstreet. To the surprise of the commanding general, he heard from his lieutenant that one wing of the foe had been driven from the field. He did not then ride forward. He knew that Rosecrans, Crittenden and McCook were in flight, back to Chattanooga, and he heard the terrible roar of battle where Polk, on the right, yet confronted Thomas. One of his divisions, among the best he had, Cheatham's and a part of Liddell's, was available to reinforce Polk or Longstreet, but General Bragg, knowing nothing of the field, did not call it up. It had not been engaged.⁷ When Longstreet called on the commanding general for troops to hold what he had won, Bragg replied that he had none; that "there is no fight in Polk's men"—a most absurd thing to say.

Thomas held his position all the afternoon and until dusk against the most resolute efforts of the Confederate right to capture it. He fought behind log breastworks and fought also without protection. The slaughter was terrible. He retired at dusk, but was not routed, as Crittenden and McCook had been. He halted on the way and remained in line of battle next day.

Bragg held the field and all the spoils. Twenty-seven thousand dead and wounded lay there, thousands of small arms and scores of cannon. The invader's loss was 11,081; the Confederates' 15,935. Rosecrans had 59,000 infantry and artillery; Bragg, 55,000. Rosecrans' cavalry was one thousand less than Bragg's.⁸

The day after the battle General Armstrong, of Forrest's command, riding across the field of conflict, came near General Bragg, who was stalking in an excited way to and fro on the path. Armstrong, dismounting, approached the

⁷Cleburne and His Command, p. 136.

⁸Ibid., p. 139.

general commanding, venturing to congratulate him on the victory he had won. Bragg did not turn his head. Still walking nervously, he spoke only the words: "But the army is horribly disorganized."⁹

President Lincoln telegraphed to his wife from the hotel in New York, where news of the battle reached him, his great joy in the result. The defeat of his army on the field and its retreat of a few miles were of no consequence. The Confederacy had gained nothing; the Confederate loss in men was irreparable. The result of the battle was a decisive gain to the cause of the conqueror. He held Chattanooga, he held Knoxville. Behind him were Tennessee and Kentucky, forever his own. Mississippi was his own and all northern Alabama. From Chattanooga, as a base, he would proceed in his own time to march to Atlanta, lay waste the plantations of southeastern Georgia and the black belt of Alabama, and thus destroy the source of supplies for all Confederate armies between the Rappahannock and the Tom Bigbee. The armies of Mr. Lincoln did not need to win battles. They could well afford to permit the Confederates to sleep on every battlefield and gather all the arms, of latest patterns, dropped by his dead and fleeing soldiers. The gain to him was definite and satisfactory when the Confederate roll-call showed a third of their men gone. To him the shortened roll of his antagonist was successful war. He had won already entire states and parts of other states by the battles the Confederates had won; he would win more territory, and finally all the territory, by future collisions where the Confederates proved their superior fighting qualities.

We hasten on to the quick-coming time when Mr. Lincoln found a full match to the policy of war he imagined he had firmly established at Chickamauga. He found confronting him, almost within rifle-shot of Chickamauga, a genius of war who outstripped his most sanguine expectations. He was outdone. Johnston succeeded Bragg.

Mr. Lincoln was a candidate (1864) for reelection.

⁹Confederate Veteran.

Mr. Lincoln sent Thurlow Weed to Albany with the following propositions to Horatio Seymour, anti-war governor of New York:

"If Governor Seymour will withdraw his opposition to the draft, and use his authority and influence as governor in putting down the riots in New York, and will coöperate in all reasonable ways with the administration in suppression of the southern rebellion, President Lincoln, on his part, will agree fully and honestly to renounce all claims to the presidency for the second term and will decline under any circumstances to be a candidate for reelection, and will further agree to throw his entire influence, in so far as he can control it, in behalf of Horatio Seymour for president of the United States."¹⁰

We shall come to the particulars in due time. Returning to the battle, General Wheeler's official report of the operations of his cavalry in the Chickamauga campaign is invaluable military history. He wrote:

"On the 29th [August] the enemy crossed the Tennessee river in force, driving back the pickets of Colonel Estes' regiment. About 500 men of General Martin's division, under Lieutenant-Colonel Mauldin, moved up Will's Valley and were placed on picket duty below Chattanooga.

"It now became evident that the enemy were moving two divisions of cavalry and McCook's corps of infantry over Sand's mountain and into Will's Valley by the Caperton road. I was ordered to take position in Broomtown valley for the purpose of picketing Lookout Mountain. General Martin, with about 1200 men, guarded the passes from the Tennessee river to Neal's Gap, and General Wharton from Neal's Gap to Gadsden. These commands kept the enemy continually observed and full reports concerning him were several times each day sent to army headquarters. Several columns of the enemy's cavalry were pushed over the mountain, all of which were successfully driven back.

"On September 12th, McCook's corps of infantry and Stanley's corps of cavalry moved over the mountain at

¹⁰Lamon's *Recollections of Lincoln*, p. 213.

Alpine, and after a severe fight our cavalry (under Colonel Avery, a most gallant and discreet officer) was compelled to fall back.

"Skirmishing continued every day until the 17th, when I was ordered to move into McLemore's Cove, by Dug and Catlett's Gaps, and attack the enemy in order to make a demonstration in that direction. We fought for some hours, driving the enemy for some distance, but finally developed a force too large to be dislodged.

"On the following day we moved to Owen's Ford on Chickamauga river, leaving heavy pickets at all gaps of the mountain as far as Gadsden."

This was the 18th, the day of the preliminary skirmishing of Hood and the infantry for the great battle. The report next accounts for the cavalry of the left wing on the 19th and 20th, when the infantry was fully engaged. Continuing, it says:

"About 2 P. M. [the 18th] I heard the enemy's cavalry were moving up McLemore's Cove. I moved across the river and warmly assailed their flank, dividing the column and driving the enemy in confusion in both directions.

"During the night, I received orders to guard well all the passes of the mountain and all the fords of the river, down to General Longstreet's left flank, and to attack the enemy at every opportunity that presented itself. This order was complied with and the remainder of my force was concentrated at Glass' Mill. A considerable force of the enemy, the artillery, were deployed on the opposite bank and warm skirmishing commenced. As soon as arrangements could be made, I dismounted all my available force, crossed and assailed the enemy, hoping we might draw troops from the centre and thus create a diversion. After a short fight, the enemy wavered. We charged him and drove a largely superior force fully two miles, to Crawfish Spring, killing and wounding large numbers and taking thirty-five officers and men prisoners, besides the wounded. We were successful in creating the diversion, as the enemy thought our advance a heavy flank movement and reinforced this point heavily.

"The enemy, in his accounts of the battle, says General Longstreet 'flanked him at this point, at the hour we made the attack.'

"About 9 A. M. [Sunday 20th, day of the great battle] I received orders from General Longstreet to send a force of cavalry to find the enemy's position. I received orders from General Bragg, through Colonel McKinstry, to save the captured property. To accomplish both these objects, I detailed 500 of my best mounted men, under Colonel Anderson, to comply with General Longstreet's order, with full instructions to report every hour to that officer. As previously stated, two regiments were already at work collecting arms, leaving me with about 1700 men.

"Just at this time I received information from my pickets at Owen's Ford, that the enemy in large force was driving back our cavalry from that point. It was also reported that the enemy had a large train of wagons with him. At the same time I observed a heavy dust in the Chattanooga valley, which appeared to indicate a heavy movement from Chattanooga, along the foot of Lookout Mountain, toward McLemore's Cove. For the purpose of succoring the command reported at Owen's Ford, I immediately moved over to Chattanooga valley and drove back toward Chattanooga the force that was moving from that place. I then left the 8th Texas Rangers, and my escort, to hold the enemy in check, while with the balance of the command I moved up toward McLemore's Cove.

"After marching about five miles we met a large force of cavalry, which seeing the dust of our approach, had deployed a considerable force in a strong position. I immediately deployed two regiments and commenced skirmishing. Finding their position strong, I detached a squadron to their right flank. This caused the enemy to waver, when we charged in line, and also in column on the road, driving him in confusion. The enemy tried to form a new line with his reserves several times, but we met him with such force as to disperse him each time, driving him before us. We continued the charge several miles, killing, capturing or dispersing nearly the whole command, said to be

about 2000 men. We secured immediately upon the road only about 400. We also captured 18 stands of colors and secured their entire train, numbering about 90 wagons, loaded with valuable baggage. Many of the men who escaped to the neighboring woods were picked up on the following morning and only 75 men, half of whom were dismounted, succeeded in reaching the federal army. We also captured a number of arms. The wagons and mules we turned over to the chief quartermaster of the Army of Tennessee.

"The following morning [Tuesday 22d], pursuant to orders, we pressed on within one and one-quarter miles of Chattanooga, driving the enemy's cavalry behind his infantry. We remained in this position until night, when, pursuant to orders, I proceeded towards Trenton, preparatory to crossing the Tennessee river. After one day's march I received orders to return and sweep up Lookout Mountain to Point Lookout.¹¹ The order was received at 2 P. M. and I immediately started, with an advance guard of 200 men, ordering the command to follow.

"On arriving at Summertown, at dark, I found one regiment of the enemy behind strong barricades. I dismounted my men to feel their position and charged their flanks. In their hasty retreat they left several guns, knapsacks, overcoats and cooking utensils; also their supper already cooked. By this time I heard that my command had been stopped and ordered to Chickamauga station, I, however, with my small command (which numbered 105 dismounted men), pressed the enemy off the mountain. After surveying the enemy's works and reporting fully his position to the commanding general, I proceeded to Chickamauga station.

"The results of the operations of the cavalry under my command during the battle of Chickamauga were, first,

¹¹General Bragg called at General Longstreet's bivouac Monday, September 21st, to confer on the movement of the army. Longstreet advised crossing the Tennessee and forcing Rosecrans to evacuate Chattanooga. The plan was accepted, but soon recalled. Wheeler's crossing and recall indicates the fact.*

*Longstreet's From Manassas to Appomattox.

guarding the left flank of the army for a distance of ninety miles during, and for twenty days preceding, the battle of Chickamauga, during which time it continually observed and skirmished with the enemy, developing all his diversions. During this battle, with the available force (which never exceeded 2000 men) not on other duty (such as guarding the flanks), we fought the enemy vigorously and successfully, killing and wounding large numbers and capturing 2000 prisoners, 100 wagons and teams, a large amount of other property, and 18 stands of colors, all of which were turned over to the proper authorities.

"To Generals Wharton and Martin, commanding divisions, and Colonels Wheeler, Morgan (J. T.), Crews and Harrison, commanding brigades I tender my thanks for their zeal and energy and gallantry during the engagement."

It has been shown that when General Bragg placed his army in line of battle on Chickamauga river (a creek), he sent Wheeler to protect his left flank and Forrest the right.

The suffering of Wheeler's cavalry for rations, pending the great battle, was intense. One of the troopers remembers to this day that on the third day of his total abstinence from food, his regiment passed through a patch of growing sorghum. The men broke off joints of this, filling their haversacks or pockets and partially appeasing their hunger.

CHAPTER XII

1863

SEQUATCHIE VALLEY RAID

When the war drum no longer beat, General Bragg fell dead on his way across the street; and so much for the disease which in the whole war time had enfeebled, body and mind, this accomplished soldier and dauntless patriot.

The victor of Chickamauga heard from the rear, in the hours of the titanic struggle, good reports from his arms; he did not accredit them. It was Monday morning, after breakfast, before he could be persuaded that Sunday had brought great glory to his banners. Then, on the urgency of Longstreet, he ordered Wheeler to cross the Tennessee to intercept the trains of Rosecrans, which were crossing all day Monday and all Monday night, as if to escape the surely pending fate of Chattanooga. Next day a messenger was dispatched recalling the cavalry. Chattanooga would be invested.

Strategical opportunities, however, with this army were hampered by certain unhappy conditions within. The general commanding had not forgotten that all of his ranking subordinates had petitioned the president to relieve him immediately after the battle of Murfreesboro. He was conscious immediately after Chickamauga of the general distrust of him with officers and troops.

Two weeks after this last great battle, that is, October 4th, a second petition to the president for the removal of the commanding general was sent forward, signed now by a number of the ranking generals. Meantime, Lieutenant-General Polk was put under arrest and ordered to Atlanta. Major-General Hindman was under arrest. Lieutenant-General D. H. Hill and Major-General Buckner were known to

be in anticipation of some expression of General Bragg's displeasure. Major-General Breckinridge had been hurried off to Mississippi. The army organization was seriously disturbed.

President Davis, in response to the petition of October 4th, reached the army on the 10th. He brought with him Lieutenant-General John C. Pemberton, lately paroled from Vicksburg, and Pemberton brought his baggage and his staff. The purpose of the president was to place Pemberton over Polk's corps. He soon discovered the angry feeling of the corps when informed of that strange purpose, so Pemberton went away. The president called into conference, at General Bragg's headquarters, and in Bragg's presence, all the generals of highest rank. In this meeting he himself interrogated each, what about the general commanding? What was the matter with him? Longstreet and D. H. Hill, commanding corps, Cleburne and the others answered promptly. The answers of some were milder in form than others; the answers of some were most emphatic. Not a voice was raised to advise the retention of the general commanding. None condemned his spirit and none commended his capacity. The president continued his journey to Mississippi. Bragg remained, doubly assured of the confidence of the government.

President Lincoln, knowing less than the actual conditions in the Confederate army and more of the situation with Rosecrans than reports from that quarter were ready to admit, sent an alarm telegram to Burnside at Knoxville to watch Bragg. His next movement might be expected to take him into Kentucky again, by way of east Tennessee.

Bragg moved from the battlefield of Chickamauga forward to invest Chattanooga, laying his plan to starve the enemy into surrender. Just one year before, in the same month of September, Bragg threw away in western Kentucky his perfect opportunity to beat Buell to Louisville and, occupying that place, to carry the seat of war away from the vitals of the Confederacy.

On the night of the 22d, two nights after the battle, Bragg's advance was, figuratively speaking, under the walls

of Chattanooga. Cleburne's skirmishers advanced almost to the railroad station in the town.¹

The town sits on a great inverted bend of the Tennessee, on the left or east bank. Missionary Ridge lies to the northeast, on the Georgia side of the river, while to the southwest rises Lookout Mountain. Roads leading out of Chattanooga towards Atlanta at once pass between Missionary Ridge and Lookout Mountain. The distance between the two overhanging ranges of hills and mountains at their nearest points of contact, near Chattanooga, is only three or four miles, and this territory is mostly rough valley, in forest.

General Bragg, investing the town, placed the right wing of his army, that is, the Army of Tennessee, on Missionary Ridge, while Longstreet's corps of the Army of Northern Virginia went upon Lookout Mountain. The two detachments were, of course, connected by troops in the narrow valley.

The Confederate commander's theory of war in this instance, to starve the foe into capitulation or disastrous retreat, depended entirely upon Longstreet's uninterrupted possession of Lookout Mountain. The mountain runs down almost to the brink of the Tennessee.

General Rosecrans had collected at Bridgeport, on the Tennessee, twenty-eight miles below Chattanooga, a large depot of supplies, connected by the Nashville and Chattanooga railroad with Chattanooga. Besides the railroad route of transportation, there was a sufficient wagon road available through Will's Valley. But while Longstreet held Lookout, neither the railroad nor the wagon road could be used for a moment by the besieged invader in Chattanooga. As these two roads skirted the river, navigation was closed also to the besieged. On the north side of the river there was a wagon road, through Sequatchie valley and over Walden's Ridge, a mountainous elevation. This road was sixty miles long, tortuous, narrow and difficult of use for loaded trains. It connected Bridgeport with the Tennessee, opposite Chattanooga, and was the only road by which

¹Cleburne and His Command, p. 154.

General Rosecrans could receive a pound of rations for his army or a load of ammunition.

Having assigned to Longstreet the part of blocking the near ways to the depot of supplies at Bridgeport, the Confederate commander appointed Wheeler to break up the already precarious and long wagon road communication through Sequatchie valley and over Walden's Ridge. These two enterprises, well sustained, he might bide results with a most reasonable measure of confidence. Longstreet failed; Wheeler's success was among the phenomena of the annals of war.

On September 27th Wheeler received his orders. At that very moment General Rosecrans' artillery and cavalry horses, in Chattanooga, were dying for want of feed and his troops were barely able to subsist on their rations. Starving soldiers stole the corn from the starving horses. He had not ammunition for defense even. Wheeler, with familiar energy and eager anticipation, called in his regiments and announced himself ready, within twenty-four hours, with Martin's and Wharton's divisions. The dashing young Kelly was left with about 1400 men, with the main army.

Forrest was in east Tennessee, active, of course, driving in such detachments as Burnside might send out after President Lincoln's warning to watch any movement of Bragg's in direction of Cumberland Gap. This wonderful soldier was thunderstruck to receive in the midst of his work an order from army headquarters to send immediately three of his best brigades to report to Wheeler on the bank of the Tennessee, above Chattanooga, and two hundred horses Captain Hines had lately brought from Kentucky. These brigades, it will be remembered, he had recruited and organized in middle Tennessee when ordered back from Kentucky, by Bragg, for that purpose, the year before. In the midst of Bragg's Kentucky campaign, the brigade Forrest had organized, and with it won his rank, had been taken from him and given to Wheeler. Repetition of that act was more than his turbulent temper could endure. Profoundly incensed, the great cavalry leader dictated to his

adjutant a fiery letter to General Bragg in protest and denunciation. The three brigades, mere remnants, were ordered to Wheeler. This done, Forrest himself took the cars for General Bragg's quarters. He found the commanding general in his tent, engaged at his desk. Forrest was accompanied by the surgeon of his corps, who it appears had no premonition of the storm about to break. The general commanding rose as the two officers entered, and advancing offered Forrest his hand. The proffered hand was refused; the enraged cavalry leader denounced his superior for the more recent injustice to him and for several acts of previous occasions, like unto it, declaring: "You are unfit to command the army," etc. The commanding general never took notice of the outbreak of temper. In the midst of Forrest's exclamations, General Bragg resumed his seat at his desk, and when the irate soldier had finished what he had to say he stalked out, mounted his horse and rode away.

Wheeler found the reinforcement from Forrest at the designated rendezvous. The saddles had not been removed from the backs of the weary horses in three days. As a whole, neither men nor horses were in condition to begin a forced march across the state of Tennessee. Many of the animals were hobbling along for want of shoes. The men were very hungry. An inspection was made; those horses supposed to be equal to the work ahead were separated from those not able to undertake it, the result leaving some 1500 of Forrest's three brigades for the raid. After this precaution General Wheeler was seriously disappointed to find the young and handsome ranking brigadier from Forrest, Frank C. Armstrong, unfit to go. Armstrong made the report in person, offering to procure surgeon's certificate. The command of the Forrest contingent then fell upon Brigadier-General Davidson. The force under Wheeler, ready to march upon the expedition, numbered in full 3937 effectives.²

Wheeler rode on up the river to find a ford. General Rosecrans dispatched Brigadier-General George Crook,

²Off. War Records.

with cavalry, already on the north side protecting the wagon road to Bridgeport, to follow and prevent the crossing. Crook had as many men as Wheeler, that is, about 4000. The hostile troopers marched along for miles, each flag on its own side of the stream. Wheeler at length resolved to force a crossing. In this he succeeded. Crook reported: "It was impossible for me to resist their crossing, as there was no ford at the river where they crossed, until they made it last night." Wheeler reported that he crossed fighting a force larger than his and drove it several miles.

On the north side the Confederates halted for the day and the force was there organized into three divisions, Martin, Wharton and Davidson, respectively, the division commanders, the last named from Forrest, in lieu of Armstrong, left behind sick, as we have seen.

About dusk, in drenching rain, October 1st, the bugle call, "Boots and saddles," put the column in motion. Winding their way over the narrow mountain road, the general in command leading, about ten o'clock, in the intense darkness, the general and his staff butted against a regiment of cavalry. Quick as thought he shouted back the order, "Charge!" The astonished foe heard and scattered in all directions.

The second night out the command bivouacked on the crest of the mountain. Martin and Wharton were called to the general's log fire. They were informed that six miles away, in the Sequatchie valley, the train that General Bragg wished captured was moving slowly, and that General Wheeler in person would lead a detachment to execute his orders. The gallant young Wharton protested. A divided small force, surrounded by heavy forces, within the enemy's lines, was a venture in war contrary to the maxims. "I have my orders, gentlemen, and I will attempt the work. General Martin will accompany me; General Wharton will go on with the remainder of the command to the vicinity of McMinnville, where I shall join him tomorrow night, if I am alive." That was enough said by Wheeler.

At three o'clock in the morning Wheeler, at the head of

about 1500 of his best men and horses, rode down the mountain, Martin and Colonel Avary by his side; the 51st Alabama, Colonel John T Morgan following close up. Six miles, and in the valley below a section of the enemy's train was discovered, thirty-two six-mule wagons, well guarded, loaded for Chattanooga. They were all captured, with 200 mules. Russell's 4th Alabama was detached to guard the property and the prisoners. A youth of this regiment tied his horse to a wagon-wheel and went under the white top into a cheese box. The general looked in, passing, and called out, "Come out, there, and go to meet the enemy." "Yes, general, I am very hungry and am filling my haversack." Side by side the boy and the general rode forward. The boy had served in Wheeler's cavalry many months, but had never laid eyes on the commander until then. The first impression was lasting, and in the later years, when the armies had dissolved, the two became neighbors in the city of New York, and firm friends.

As the sun rose upon the valley a wonderful scene opened upon the Confederates on the mountainside. As far as the eye reached, white-top wagons, drawn each by six handsomely harnessed mules, trailed along the narrow road. As the way pushed up the mountain, far away, the white-tops slowly ascended with it. In the lead rode a brigade of cavalry; a brigade of cavalry brought up the rear; long files of infantry walked alongside, their muskets ready for action. The Confederate bugle sounded the charge; the infantry guards were captured or dispersed; the cavalry guards were beaten back and routed, the entire train, some 800 wagons and more than 4000 mules were captured.*

Far away in Chattanooga General Rosecrans heard the explosion of this train of ammunition wagons. General Crook dispatched to him: "The rebels must have 10,000 men, from the most reliable information I can get." Rosecrans wrote to Burnside at Knoxville, reproaching him for permitting Wheeler to cross the Tennessee between their respective armies. "Heaven only knows where the mischief will end," wrote the general. "If you don't unite with us

*Wheeler's Report.

soon you will be responsible for another catastrophe, I fear." To another of his subordinates he insisted that Wheeler was bound for Kentucky, to destroy the Louisville and Nashville railroad, and thence across the Ohio to release John H. Morgan.⁴

Beside the government wagons, many sutlers' wagons were in the train. A private of the 51st Alabama labored in vain to open a great leather trunk. The sharp order, "Fall in!" interrupted him. A comrade, less disciplined, broke the lock and from the contents took some new suits of men's silk underwear, very useful and rare, a handsome gold watch and chain and a brace of ivory-handled revolvers, with various other things. The wagons, except the few Wheeler felt able to carry off, were burned, the mules, some 4000, were drawn up in line and shot or sabered.

A day of unparallel raiding was now near the close. Wheeler called his men together and set out to rejoin Wharton, some forty miles distant. By ten o'clock the day following he was drawn up with Wharton in front of McMinnville. Military Governor Andrew Johnson's son-in-law, Patterson, was the commander of the post. Patterson says his scouts deceived him; reputable citizens of Union sympathies misled him. The immediate command of the post was in a moment transformed in some mysterious manner to Colonel Thompson, and Patterson left. Wheeler sent forward a flag, with a demand for unconditional surrender. Five hundred and eighty-seven soldiers, several hundred horses, were captured and millions of dollars of army supplies were destroyed there. While this work was in progress, a train of cars, loaded, was detected in preparation for a hasty departure. The cars, engine and contents were destroyed, and the same fate overtook the railroad bridges over Harrison creek and Collins river, near by. The remaining hours of daylight of October 3d and all that night were consumed in destroying the army property at McMinnville.

By now news of the raiders had fallen upon all the

⁴Off. War Rec., vol. XXX., Pt. 4, p. 114.

posts from Chattanooga to Nashville. McCook and Mitchell were in the saddle in pursuit. General George Crook, somewhat belated, came upon the scene. All rode as rapidly as they could. They could not head off the Confederates, nor even overtake them without serious consequences. Twenty-five thousand invaders were in pursuit.

From McMinnville, Wheeler rode toward the field of his glory, months before, the battle ground of Murfreesboro. The town here was found to be strongly entrenched and garrisoned, and he left it to one side, after capturing a stockade exposed on the suburbs. Passing on, he destroyed the railroad bridges over Stone's River, in the direction of Nashville. Along the railroad, toward Nashville, he destroyed track and bridges and captured stockades. He rode near Nashville and turned southward.

The raid was now complete. The enemy had deflected an overwhelming force of cavalry and infantry. The Confederate leader had executed his orders.

Wheeler planned to reach the Tennessee at a ford at Mussels' Shoals. Shelbyville lay in the way. The garrison fled as he approached and the large depots of stores there were burned. Thirteen thousand troops were in close pursuit. The garrison at Columbia, hearing of the matter, fifty miles away, burned the stores there and dispersed.

After leaving Shelbyville General Wheeler put his three divisions in camp for the night along Duck river, Davidson first in order, Martin next, with which he in person remained, and Wharton farthest off with the wagon train. About ten o'clock at night General Wheeler sent back to General Davidson word of warning to extraordinary vigilance; a little later he sent to that officer positive orders to break camp and move down the river to Martin's camp, where the commanding general rested. Men and horses were fast asleep; men and horses, officers as well, were thoroughly wearied to the point of exhaustion. General Davidson did not obey. The result put the entire command in great jeopardy. At dawn Davidson was heavily attacked from Shelbyville. He informed General Wheeler that he was in retreat down the river, pursued by a force he could not

successfully resist. Wheeler dispatched to Wharton, lower down the river bank, the news, ordering him to rush the train on toward the Tennessee ford. He set out at a trot in the lead of Martin to interpose that force between Davidson, retreating, and the pursuing foe. That was the only hope of saving Davidson from capture or dispersion. Riding hard, Wheeler in lead of Martin's men, came into the road to Mussels' Shoals at Farmington, just in time to form across it to meet the advancing enemy before they might strike Davidson. Davidson rode on. A message was hurried on to him to halt and form across the Lewisburg pike by columns of fours, and when Martin, dismounted, had received the enemy with a volley, to charge. But Davidson did nothing of the kind. Wharton, by orders, went on ahead with the train. The enemy saw Davidson still marching away. They knew Wharton was out of reach with the train. They advanced with utmost confidence.

Now came the Farmington fight, the last of the many conflicts of the Sequatchie valley raid; a most brilliant fight. The enemy advanced on Martin's thin line; the Confederates stood their ground as firmly as ever heroes did. For twenty minutes the strife raged. The enemy hesitated, then wavered. Wheeler called to the men to mount and led them in full charge through the ranks of the fleeing foe.

Unmolested the Confederates went into camp that night on their way to the Mussels' Shoals ford. Among the wounded left on the field was Captain J. J. Seawell of Company I, 51st Alabama. He was placed in a farmhouse near the field and his leg amputated. In course of time he recovered strength, gained assistance from the country folk, crossed the river into Alabama and made his way on crutches to his home at Marion, Perry county, there to live an influential citizen for many years.

General Wheeler's trains were ferried across the Tennessee, above the shoals, in security. The enemy did not follow in force from Farmington. The cavalry forded the river at Mussels' Shoals and went into camp in the

vicinity of Courtland, where corn and meat in abundance were found.

From the north bank of the river, while waiting to be the last man to take the ford, Wheeler wrote a dispatch to the governor. He was evidently in fine spirits. He complimented his men and officers as a whole in extravagant terms, recommending some by name for promotion, among them Colonel John T. Morgan to be brigadier-general.

The crossing was a venture in itself, considering the condition of the stream. Great boulders lay in every conceivable form across the ford. Mounted men would force their horses to ascend and then take the leap from these, completely submerged, to rise and repeat the performance again and again.

Near Courtland lived Mr. Jones. The general was invited to Mr. Jones' house. There he met and wooed the sole daughter of the house, a widow yet in her teens, Mrs. Sherrod, his first love. A year after the war they were married.

General Grant relieved Thomas, as Thomas had relieved Rosecrans, about two weeks after Wheeler's Sequatchie valley raid was finished. The millions of army supplies in the rear of Chattanooga had been destroyed. The single track railroad, upon which alone fresh supplies might be forwarded, had been greatly broken. We shall let Grant describe to his government at Washington the situation of his new command at Chattanooga as he found it October 24th:

"The artillery horses and mules," he wrote, "had become so reduced by starvation that they could not have been relied on for moving anything. Any attempt at retreat must have been with men alone and with only such supplies as they could carry. A retreat would have been almost certain annihilation. Already more than 10,000 animals had perished in supplying rations to the troops by the long, tedious route from Stevenson and Bridgeport to Chattanooga, over Walden's Ridge."

The perfect success of Wheeler's raid, to the limit of his orders, is further attested by official report. Major-Gen-

eral David Hunter was dispatched by Secretary of War Stanton, from another department, to examine and report direct to him on the general condition of Grant's army at Chattanooga. Under date December 14th, 1863, he wrote, as addendum to his report, a letter to the secretary, in which he said:

"I will also add that I am fully convinced the change of commanders was not made an hour too soon and that if it had not been made just when it was we should have been driven from the valley of the Tennessee, if not from the whole state."⁵ We shall see that the main army failed to use the opportunity which Wheeler opened to it to starve the garrison of Chattanooga.

⁵Century Magazine, November, 1896, p. 15.

CHAPTER XIII

1863

THE KNOXVILLE CAMPAIGN

Immediately after the battle of Chickamauga, about 12,000 men were sent to Rosecrans from Virginia, under General Hooker. Rosecrans had made preparations to use this force, supported by some of his own, to open the short route to his Bridgeport depot of supplies. October 19th was the date he expected to move on. When the day arrived he was relieved by Thomas. Thomas accepted the original plan, but four days later he was relieved by General Grant. Grant at once entered upon the execution of Rosecrans' movement. Hooker had never come to Chattanooga. He was at Bridgeport. On October 27th he marched into Will's Valley at the base of Lookout, drove the troops of Longstreet out and was met near the Tennessee river by General W. F. Smith from Chattanooga, who had floated down stream and built a pontoon bridge. On the night of October 28th Hood's division, now under Jenkins, attacked these troops in Will's Valley and, after a bloody fight, retreated. This movement of the enemy restored to him control of the short line of transportation from Bridgeport to Chattanooga unmolested, and thus the army at Chattanooga received accustomed supplies.

Bragg continued to hold Lookout, while the remainder of his army fortified and held Missionary Ridge. No explanation has ever been made for the division of the force. The army at Chattanooga was heavily reinforced, Hooker from Virginia and Sherman from Vicksburg lending to it many strong divisions. The Confederate commander had lost control of the short line of transportation from Bridgeport to Chattanooga on the night of October 28th, but on November 4th he ordered Longstreet, with 1500 men and

most of Wheeler's cavalry, to attack Burnside at Knoxville. In a few days he sent McLaws to Longstreet with 4000 more, and on November 23d he ordered Cleburne's division to Longstreet. Most fortunately Cleburne had not proceeded out of reach when recalled with the information that Bragg's army was in the heat of battle.

Longstreet had protested against the expedition. He remembered the fatal division Bragg had made of his forces in Kentucky. Now he advised withdrawal of all the army to a strong line in the rear, there to await Grant's inevitable advance.¹

Wheeler, with Brigadier-General John T. Morgan in command of one division and Hagan of the other, Major-General Martin, second in command, led the way to Knoxville. He struck a part of a Kentucky regiment at Marysville, captured a part and dispersed the remainder. With considerable difficulty he forded Little River and pressed the foe to Stock Creek, not fordable and impassable to horses because of the injury inflicted upon the bridge by the enemy in flight. Above the broken bridge, on a precipice, the enemy had four brigades posted. The report says: "To accomplish the desired object I determined to overcome these advantages of the enemy by the vigor of our attack. The enemy kept up a warm fire of musketry and artillery, during which Major Burford, of my staff, was slightly wounded. I dismounted nearly half my command, crossed the broken bridge under cover of fire from my battery and drove the left wing of the enemy from its strong position. This enabled a detail to repair the bridge, while I pressed on with the dismounted men, compelling the entire line of the enemy to retreat." General Armstrong's brigade, mounted, was called up from the rear, crossed the repaired bridge and charged. "The lines of the enemy were broken," continues the report, "and the entire mass swept on toward Knoxville, in the wildest confusion."

The route of flight was flanked on one side by the river and on the other by the mountainside. Armstrong must make unsatisfactory pursuit. But he continued to within

¹From Manassas to Appomattox.

half mile of the city, the enemy dashing over the pontoon to find safety behind the city entrenchments. A hundred and forty prisoners were taken. Among the mortally wounded was supposed to be General Sanders. The infantry behind the fortifications appeared and the Confederates retired.

The siege of Knoxville began at once. Wheeler's cavalry, for the most part, were now dismounted, in the trenches. The remainder were employed on the flanks of the army of investment. Already General Longstreet had left Colonel Lyon, with two small regiments, in his rear to watch the enemy at Kingston, forty miles in the mountains. At ten o'clock in the evening of November 22d General Wheeler received an order to leave one brigade and proceed with the others so as to reach Kingston and attack the enemy there by dawn of the 24th. The execution of the order imposed the severest test of endurance and soldierly spirit upon his men.

The first thing was to call the men selected to go, from the trenches, in the darkness and extreme cold. Forage on hand was insufficient for even one feed, and half the command must go immediately seven miles out on the way to find a supply. Those who thus went in advance had hardly secured a supply and distributed it before day dawned and the others came up. The march was at once begun. The road was narrow, mountainous and unkept. By night, with utmost effort, only twenty-six miles had been traversed. Captain Turner, a young man who had left the naval service of the United States to engage on General Wheeler's staff, related to me that, as the men built their fires he threw his blanket on the ground, where he reclined watching with anxiety the boiling of a tin-cup of coffee. A courier came, calling him to the general, perhaps a mile away. The general spoke:

"Captain, I will go on with my escort and wish you to accompany me."

"Well, general, I have been in the saddle since midnight last night and am extremely weary and hungry."

"If you find yourself unable to discharge the duties of

my staff, sir, I shall call upon another officer!" Captain Turner accompanied the general immediately.

Farmers on the way were aroused and questioned. The enemy were strong at Kingston. At three o'clock in the morning the tired column rejoined the general.

Approaching the place, their pickets were run in and the alarm given to the enemy. The 51st Alabama was in front. They crossed a branch and deployed, about sunrise. General Wheeler ascertained from his subordinates that his troops were not in good condition to give battle. The ride of two nights and one entire day had been most trying. Many men had fallen from their horses overcome by cold and fatigue, and were left behind. The general made a personal reconnoissance of the enemy. They were found in heavy line of battle on a wooded hill, dismounted cavalry and artillery. The general found it useless to attempt an attack under the existing conditions and ordered a withdrawal, which was effected, the enemy failing to pursue. However, a skirmish line from the 51st Alabama was thrown out before the retreat. Meantime, and upon this line Lieutenant James Henry DuBose, Jr., of Company I, fell; and Private F. B. Glass was wounded. These were the casualties of the field. About the same time a regiment of cavalry from the enemy charged Wheeler's left, but was repulsed by Russell's 4th Alabama, and no damage done. The expedition thus closed. This was November 24th.

Immediately as the retreat began, in perfect order, a courier from General Longstreet rode up with an order to Wheeler from Bragg to return, in person, to the main army. The cavalry was immediately turned over to General Martin, to return to Knoxville, the end of a totally abortive but most arduous and perilous expedition. Wheeler, with members of his staff and his escort, turned his course to Missionary Ridge. Martin remained with the cavalry all winter, and until April, 1864, with Longstreet in the mountainous regions of east Tennessee. The service was sufficient to entail great suffering upon the men and their horses. When Longstreet was called back to Virginia Martin joined

the Army of Tennessee at Dalton, but his horses were mere skeletons, unfit for campaign work. General Johnston ordered them to Rome, Georgia, where they remained the greater part of April recuperating.

When General Wheeler reached the army it had been driven in disgraceful rout from Missionary Ridge down the railroad toward Atlanta. Bragg had been attacked, the first of three days' battle, on November 23d, by from 60,000 to 70,000 troops under Grant, his own strength not exceeding 35,000, but he had advantage in his position.

While Wheeler's men, hungry and freezing, rode all day of November 23d over the rugged mountains, hastening from the trenches around Knoxville to meet the foe in the rear at Kingston, Grant moved against the attenuated line of Bragg on Lookout Mountain and Missionary Ridge, having taken just one month to recuperate his men and horses and prepare for battle.

On November 23d Thomas captured Orchard Knob, a commanding position, a spur of Missionary Ridge. On the twenty-fourth Hooker, with 9000 men, drove Bragg off Lookout. That night and early on the twenty-fifth Bragg concentrated all his army on Missionary Ridge. Grant attacked and the Confederates were routed. General Bragg wrote to the president that the rout was complete and disgraceful, without cause. In fact, the army could not understand the general. He had depleted his ranks upon the mountains overlooking the camps of the enemy, which had received reinforcements nearly equal to the whole that was left of the Confederates. What was the object? The retreat continued over exceedingly bad roads. Cleburne was in the rear, with Breckinridge in command of a detachment. This rear guard seems to have been the most complete of the organization. With the others, at least very many, companies were broken into fragments; regimental and brigade commanders could not find their officers or men.² General Bragg was found, excited as none had ever seen him before. In the darkness he grasped with both his own the hand of a young staff officer of the commander of the rear guard,

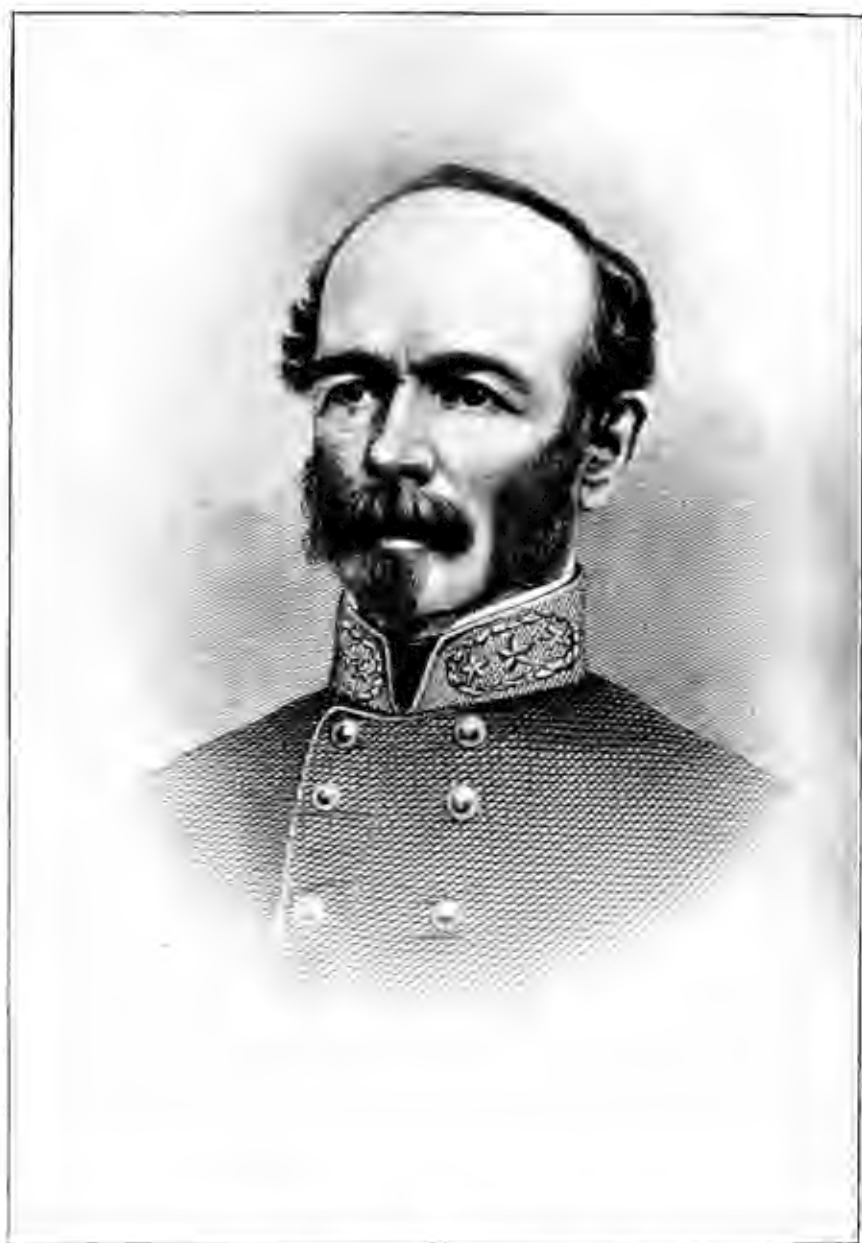
²Cleburne and His Command, p. 174.

exclaiming: "Tell General Cleburne to hold his position at all hazards. Everything depends on him."

The broken ranks were not pursued by Grant because his artillery horses were yet too poor to haul the guns.³

The troops practically dissolved, halted at Dalton. Many individuals went home to obtain shoes and clothing.

³Grant's Report.



J. E. Johnston

GENERAL, U. S. A.

CHAPTER XIV

1864

JOSEPH EGGLESTON JOHNSTON

When General Bragg saw that the fragments of his routed army from Missionary Ridge had stopped at Dalton he hastened to send his urgent request to Richmond to be relieved and ordered elsewhere. "I must get away from here as soon as possible," he wrote. He expressed a preference to be assigned to a post near Atlanta, without giving his reason.

General Johnston had been in Mississippi and Alabama, practically unemployed, since the fall of Vicksburg. Hardee was invited by the president to take permanent command of the army at Dalton, but declined, hoping Johnston would be allowed to succeed Bragg. On December 16, 1863, the president reluctantly ordered Johnston from Mississippi to "proceed to Dalton and assume command of the Army of Tennessee," adding that a letter of instructions would be sent to that army for his guidance. As soon as the command in Mississippi and Alabama, nominal as it was, could be turned over to Lieutenant-General Leonidas Polk, Johnston went to Dalton.

Few men have lived who possessed the manly physical perfection of General Lee. His refinement of nature was expressed in the simplicity of his manners. A magnificent man, a fearless man, an honest man among all men was he. In the drawing-room Lee was approachable and sympathetic. General Johnston was one inch shorter than Lee, that is, five feet ten inches. None approached him who did not feel himself in the presence of a great man. His martial bearing was unexcelled. His appearance in the saddle was an inspiration to warlike deeds. To the eye these two were sources of pride to the noblest of mothers. There was a

review of the Army of Northern Virginia and a row of private carriages from the surrounding farms lined the field, wherein many of the fairest of the daughters of Virginia sat, looking on. General Lee, surrounded by a large staff, sat on "Traveller." He sent a young member of the staff to gallop down the line of carriages to that of Miss — to say to her that Lieutenant Blank would ride by with the artillery! General Johnston was dignified, scrupulously polite and silent in the drawing-room. He had his headquarters in Demopolis in one of the most hospitable of the private residences of the town, that of Mr. Gaius Whitfield. A large company was present on one occasion at a dinner given there,—General and Mrs. Johnston, General Hardee, General Withers and their staffs, and gentlemen and ladies from the plantations. General Johnston alone asked for "bacon and greens." He received a second helping and ate nothing else. A lad, fifteen years of age, six feet tall, who had come to camp to be mustered into the army, sat opposite the commanding general. The boy ate ravenously through the menu. A taunting remark from one of the guests upon the boy's providence, in advance of camp fare, brought from the general an immoderate fit of laughter. This was the first indication from him of interest in his surroundings. He lapsed into quiet. Lee did not use tobacco in any form, nor intoxicating liquors. Johnston enjoyed a social cup. Both great soldiers were types of the manners of the United States army officers before the war—the easy manners, gallant and polite, peculiar to the southern officers.

Joseph Eggleston Johnston was born February 3d, 1807, on the property of his father, the Cherry Grove farm, Prince Edward county, Virginia. He inherited the martial instinct through the generations.

"Within the bounds of Annandale
The gentle Johnstones ride,
They've been there a thousand years,
And a thousand more they'll bide."

From the border valley of the little river Annan the Johnstone clan went forth to join their compatriots to resist the

English intrusions, and, returning, to mingle in bloody conflict with their neighbors, the Musgraves, Fosters, Graemes. On the field of Hastings Le Seigneur de Jeanville—later read, Joinville, Johnestoun, Johnstone—appeared worthy comrade of Robert de Bruis, Pierre de Balleul and others.

Peter Johnstone emigrated from Annandale to the James river settlement in 1727. Forty years later he moved with his family to Prince Edward county and settled the Cherry Grove estate, where his sons and daughters were born. He purchased a large tract of uncultivated land and with part of this he endowed Prince Edward Academy, changed to Hampden-Sidney College, at an early date.

His son, Peter, father of General Johnston, was sent to Hampden-Sidney College, but played truant and, at the age of seventeen, with a fellow student, Clement Carrington of Charlotte, ran away from school, took the horse his father had provided for his use at college, and joined the cavalry of "Light Horse" Harry Lee. His soldierly qualities promoted him at the age of eighteen to a lieutenancy, and he continued with Lee until the end of the war, winning distinction with every opportunity. Lieutenant Peter Johnston after the war inherited the Cherry Grove estate, and later married a niece of Patrick Henry, Miss Mary Wood. To them were born nine sons and one daughter. The eighth son was Joseph Eggleston, the Confederate soldier, named for Joseph Eggleston, captain of the company in Lee's cavalry of which Peter Johnston was lieutenant. It is interesting to follow the evidences of native talent in the family. Peter Johnston, the father, was a lawyer of distinction and circuit judge, a high position in his day. The eldest son of Peter and his wife, Mary Wood, was John, the father of a senator in Congress; the second son, Peter, was an eminent lawyer; the third, Charles, was a representative in Congress of the Calhoun school of politics; the fourth was Beverly, a celebrated lawyer, whose son was killed in the war with Mexico; the fifth was Edward, editor of the Washington *Intelligencer*, one of the most famous of all the political newspapers of its day. Edward fought a duel with his friend, John Minor Daniel, the distinguished editor of Vir-

ginia. The sixth son was Algernon, also an editor and the author of a book in defense of the Calhoun theory of nullification.

The Johnstons of Cherry Grove were states-rights Jeffersonian Democrats, as to most of them. So when General Johnston offered his sword to the Confederacy he came imbued with a love of its cause that was hereditary. Judge Peter Johnston was a noted horseman and rode in the chase at full speed, often taking his sons with him. When General Johnston was asked why he rode about his camps at the gallop, he said he had learned to ride at that gait in his youth, following his father in the hunt. His favorite war-horse in the Army of Tennessee was a high-bred bay mare that he rode generally at full gallop. She was clear-footed, docile and capable of long-protracted work, and her energetic and graceful motion under the saddle served well to display the impressive figure of her master. General Johnston was extremely martial in his bearing, even seated at the fireplace, but on a horse, spirited and noble in action, perhaps no soldier ever imparted better the idea of war incarnate. Words convey no adequate conception of his splendid bearing,—but it was the mounted commander, whose magnificent, martial presence wrought the minds of the men in the ranks to wildest enthusiasm when he passed by.

The lad was well grounded in the classics when he entered the Abingdon Academy. His parents, each in turn, had been his preceptors. He learned so easily that in mature manhood he found time to read the ancient languages. One day while at school at home, a child of ten years at the time, he took his gun, mounted his horse and took a negro boy, his playmate,—as the custom was in the time of master and slave,—Robert by name, on the trip. Joseph undertook to explain to Robert the practice of war. A square was marked off, within which the infantry (Robert and the gun) was placed. The cavalry (Joseph, on his horse) withdrew to a certain point from which the charge was to be made. Joseph was thrown in the battle and his leg so badly fractured that the bones protruded through the skin.

The broken bone was reset after a long wait—until Robert could go home and provide transportation for the “cavalry” thither. It was observed that the young soldier did not wince nor groan in the operation, though the surgery was exceedingly awkward. Nor was the fight between the “infantry” and the “cavalry” on this occasion the limit of Joseph’s military practice. He organized an “army” of the schoolboys, of which he was general and his brother colonel.¹

Johnston was graduated from West Point in the class with Robert E. Lee, the latter being less than one month the senior of the former in age. The youths were intimate friends, as their fathers had been. They were ever, to the end, intimate friends. The personal character and mental processes of two soldiers distinctively great, of the same generation, fighting under the same banner, were never perhaps so much alike and so actively sympathetic with each other as these two.

General Johnston maintained private bookshelves which approached the dignity of a library at his posts of assignment. His literary tastes were notably refined. He wrote readily, with a defined touch of the poetical sentiment in his more earnest sentences. His battle order at Cassville, his farewell to the army at Atlanta, at least one of his elaborate letters to President Davis and his voluminous “Narrative,” are permanent testimonials to his literary attainments. His personal attachments were strong. Whiting, of the old army, a fine soldier and an accomplished gentleman, had joined him on staff duty at Harper’s Ferry. From his camp at Centerville, March 6, 1862, the general wrote to his friend and subordinate: “You have been more despondent lately than one gifted like you by Providence should be. You owe it to the Giver of good gifts and our cause to throw such weight off your faculties, to leave them their full value.”

Lee was tactful and conciliatory of empiricism in high places; Johnston was obedient to superiors, yet retaining his independent opinions without disguise.

¹ The family history above cited, and the correlated facts, are from Hughes’ Johnston.

In the drawing-room, in the war time, General Lee was affable and approachable; General Johnston, always polite, dignified and silent.

West Point graduated, in the class of 1820, Charles Mason of New York, first in honor; Robert E. Lee of Virginia, second; Joseph Eggleston Johnston, thirteenth. Forty-six graduates composed the class. Johnston's class standing was no doubt seriously affected by the failure of his eyes in a critical time of application. The result was that the surgeon forbade night study. His deportment mark was high, his industry excellent. Astronomy and the French language were his favorite studies at the Academy. Ever after he cultivated his early tastes in the same direction and also continued to read Greek.

Cadet Johnston entered the army immediately upon his graduation. President Andrew Jackson sent General Scott to Charleston, South Carolina, in the fall of 1832 with some troops, to put down Calhoun and the nullifiers. Lieutenant Johnston was in this service, while three of his brothers were in Columbia, members of Governor Hayne's state army, organized to nullify.

In 1836 he went to Florida for the second time, to fight the Seminoles, now a member of the staff of General Scott, commanding the expedition. The Indians could not be overtaken in the swamps and recesses, so well known to them. The climate forbade the marching of white men for a third of the year. Johnston resigned and became an engineer in civil life. The Seminole war opened again. He volunteered, and so distinguished himself in battle that he returned to the army. In one engagement he received two scalp wounds, the scar remaining permanently; his hat, red sash and uniform were so riddled with Indian bullets that one of his companions asked leave to preserve them as curiosities. For courage in this war he was breveted major and then lieutenant-colonel. At the storming of Chapultepec, his regiment led the way. General Scott reported "the right wing, under the very gallant and accomplished Lieutenant-Colonel Johnston," had performed wonders. It is sufficient to say that

Johnston came out of the war with Mexico with great honor, won under fire.

In 1855, Jefferson Davis, secretary of war, he was commissioned lieutenant-colonel of the 1st dragoons, E. V. Sumner colonel. In 1858 he accompanied the expedition of Albert Sidney Johnston to Utah as inspector-general. The object was to subdue the Mormons.

General Jesup, next in rank to Lieutenant-General Scott, commander of the army, died. Jesup was quartermaster-general by assignment. In 1860, in the midst of the fierce contest between Lincoln and Breckinridge for the presidency, Congress created the quartermaster's department of the War Office. Secretary of War John B. Floyd, a Virginian, invited Scott to name an officer to be appointed quartermaster-general, with the rank of brigadier-general. In response, Scott named three of southern birth and one of northern: Joseph E. Johnston and Robert E. Lee, of Virginia; Albert Sidney Johnston of Texas, and Charles F. Smith of Pennsylvania, all officers of distinguished merit. When the announcement of Scott's nominees appeared, the secretary of war expressed his intention to advise the selection of Joseph Johnston; Senator Jefferson Davis, then chairman of the Committee on Military, preferred Sidney Johnston, and earnestly pleaded with President Buchanan to send that name to the Senate. Some northern senators, supporters of Lincoln, with premonitions of intensified sectional rivalry, preferred Smith. Joseph Johnston's name was sent to the Senate, the entire roll of senators voted and the confirmation was made, thirty-one for to three against.² The three who voted "no" were northern men, Hale from New England, a leading abolitionist, among them. Mr. Davis yielded his choice and led in the proceedings to confirm the appointment, made against his wishes.

As soon as the news reached Lieutenant-Colonel R. E. Lee on the frontier he wrote the following tender and manly letter:

"SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS, July 30, 1860.

"My dear General: I am delighted at accosting you by

²Hughes' Johnston, p. 35.

your present title and feel my heart exult within me at your position. I hope the old state may always be able to furnish worthy successors to the first chief of your new department; and that in your administration the country and army will have cause to rejoice that it has fallen on you. Please present my cordial congratulations to Mrs. J—— and say that I fear, now that she will have you constantly with her, she will never want to see me again. May happiness and prosperity always attend you, is the sincere wish of

“Very truly yours,

“R. E. LEE.

“General J. E. Johnston,

“Quartermaster-General, U. S. A.”

It may be profitable here to mention another incident which shows the intimacy between Lee and Johnston, inherited from their fathers. A favorite nephew of Johnston's was killed in battle, in the attack on Contreras, Mexico, in the afternoon. Johnston had not heard of the event. The next day, just as his own success against some works seemed to justify his friends in communicating the sad news to him, Captain R. E. Lee was selected to carry it. Gently as was the act performed, it so shocked the heart of the devoted uncle, the hero of the moment, that he fell prostrate on the works he had captured.

Two habits of war lay open to the embrace of the powerful young republic at its birth. It refused one and forfeited the other.

The young men of the east, brave enough, deeply imbued with fanatical hatred of the south, knew how neither to shoot nor ride. To the last man in the Confederate ranks, skill in the use of the firearms, art in horsemanship, endurance in outdoor exercise were a combination of acquirements. Would the government appreciate its opportunity? Would the government limit the war to a defense of positions and interests within its territory? Would the Confederate government prosecute a war of invasion?

The farms and great plantations of the south had little connection with one another. A hostile invasion, destructive of tobacco and wheat fields in Virginia, disturbed in small degree, if at all, the rice fields of South Carolina or the cotton planting business in Alabama. On the contrary, the permanent possession of a single line of railroad in 1861-62 by the Confederate army—for example, the Baltimore and Ohio road—would have been expected to convulse the business by which a very large proportion of the people of the north lived. The hostile possession of the capital of the United States by the Confederate States would have been expected to shake public confidence in the paper currency of the former, so that the powerful political factions which throughout the contest divided the northern people would have made abortive the war of conquest then begun.

The Confederate government made choice; the defense of Richmond was declared to be the military emergency.

There was not a leading man in the Confederacy responsible for the genesis of its government, not a leading secessionist from Virginia to Texas, who favored the defensive policy of its war. So far as is known, none of the great strategists of the army favored that policy.

Colonel R. E. Lee and General J. E. Johnston were in Washington. Both resolved promptly to resign and go back to Virginia. Lee wrote from his home the following letter:

“ARLINGTON, WASHINGTON CITY P. O.,

“April 20, 1861.

“Hon. Simon Cameron,

“Secretary of War.

“Sir: I have the honor to tender the resignation of my commission as colonel of the first regiment of cavalry.

“R. E. LEE,

“Colonel First Cavalry.”

This officer had been promoted from lieutenant-colonel of the 2d cavalry very recently. His standing was the highest.

Johnston was embarrassed by official duties. He set to

work industriously to arrange his official accounts and, two days later, wrote:

"WASHINGTON, April 22, 1861.

"Hon. Simon Cameron,

"Secretary of War.

"Sir: With feelings of deep regret, I respectfully tender the resignation of my commission in the army of the United States. The feelings which impel me to this act are, I believe, understood by the Honorable Secretary of War. I hope that long labor, hardship, danger and loss of blood, may give me some claim to ask the early consideration of this communication.

"Most respectfully, your obedient servant,

"J. E. JOHNSTON,

"Quartermaster-General."

General Scott protested with each soldier, pleading for the retention of his commission. Both made a startling sacrifice.

The retiring officers at once started for Richmond. Johnston carried nothing of property save his side arms. The sword was that worn by his father in the Revolutionary War, as he served under Lee's father, and had never been worn by the son before then. Lee abandoned his splendid home, Arlington, on the Potomac.

Arriving two days before Johnston, Lee was made major-general by Virginia and commander of state troops. As soon as Johnston appeared, he reported to the governor and was appointed by him major-general next in rank to Lee.

Some three weeks after this, that is, May 13th, President Davis appointed both Lee and Johnston brigadier-generals in the Confederate army, and both were immediately confirmed by the provisional Congress, of a single chamber, sitting in the capitol at Montgomery. But on March 16th Congress amended the act of March 6th so as to drop the rank and title "brigadier" and substituted for it the rank and title "general"—"full" general, as was the parlance, the highest army rank.

Both appointees having accepted the office, Mr Davis

immediately summoned General Johnston to Montgomery by telegram. General Lee remained in Virginia. The original dispatch to Johnston failing of prompt delivery, a duplicate was sent and upon this he arrived at the president's office. Earnest and prolonged conferences, to which other military men were called, were held with him by the president. The result was that as general, appointed under an act of March 6th, he was sent to take command at Harper's Ferry and the territory adjacent, and under him were placed several brigadier-generals.

Colonel E. Kirby Smith, a most accomplished soldier of the old army, was made adjutant-general at Harper's Ferry. He wrote, under date June 2d, 1861: "Our General Johnston is the first military man of the day—active, experienced and intelligent," etc. Again, June 24th: "My position is adjutant-general of the army, under General Johnston, and as he is the senior of all the generals appointed in the Confederate service, and the most experienced and able, my place is one of great importance and consideration."³

The government desired to hold Harper's Ferry. General Johnston pointed out the indefensible nature of the position. Maryland Heights, overlooking it, completely commanded it. Later in the war, September, 1862, Stonewall Jackson captured the 6000 strong garrison of the invader there from those heights without firing a gun. As Patterson reinforced his already superior army on the Maryland side and moved forward, Johnston removed to Winchester, southward, the machinery of the arsenal left by the United States, and withdrew to that position.

By forced marches General Johnston eluded Patterson and with a part of his troops fought the battle of First Manassas in conjunction with Beauregard's—or, rather, a part of Beauregard's—already on the field, awaiting. Johnston was general, Beauregard brigadier-general, in the progress of that battle.

General Johnston did not reach the field of First Manassas until Saturday, July 20th, the day before the great battle. He did not know the ground, while Beauregard

³General Kirby Smith, pp. 175-179.

knew it thoroughly. Beauregard disposed the troops for action, but McDowell attacked the Confederate left, while field-works and troops to receive him awaited on the right. Thus several of Beauregard's best brigades had little or no part in the day. On the other hand, all of Johnston's troops that arrived, except one regiment, were hotly engaged. Beauregard put in action 9977 men; Johnston put in 8334. Johnston lost fifteen per cent. of those engaged; Beauregard, seven per cent.⁴ The aggregate of Confederate troops actually engaged was 17,664; that of the invader's, about 19,000. Both Confederate generals rode all day on the battle front. The provisional Congress passed a resolution warmly congratulatory of both.

A little more than one month after the battle, the president sent out the commissions of the five generals, provided for by the act of March 6, 1861. First, Samuel Cooper, to rank from May 16th, the day on which the act of March 6th was amended, as just explained; second, A. S. Johnston, to rank from May 28th; third, R. E. Lee, to rank from June 14th; fourth, J. E. Johnston, to rank from July 4th, and fifth, G. T. Beauregard, to rank from the date of the great victory, July 21st.

General Johnston was greatly surprised and mortified. The act of March 6th, which was the sole authority for creating the office, provided with great care that "the commissions issued should bear one and the same date, so that the relative rank of officers shall be determined by their former commissions in the United States army, held anterior to the secession of the Confederate States from the United States."⁵ This provision of the law, mandatory and of a well-understood motive, had been observed in fixing the dates of the commissions of all but J. E. Johnston. Cooper had been colonel and adjutant-general in the old army, ranking all but J. E. Johnston. A. S. Johnston had been colonel and brevet brigadier-general; Lee had been colonel only a short time, Beauregard had been major. J. E. Johnston had

⁴Hughes' Johnston, p. 67.

⁵Statutes Provisional Congress.

been brigadier-general since the summer of 1860, as we have seen.

No appointments could have more pleased the country or have been more judicious. As between the relative merits of three—A. S. Johnston, J. E. Johnston and R. E. Lee—whatever distinction may have been discovered in any, it involved no appreciable difference with the others. Had either remained alone, in the old army, he would have been its leader; had one only come to the Confederacy, he would have been the recognized general over all.

But that is not the question here. Mr. Davis after the war wrote profusely of his acts as president, bearing upon the war, and of the Confederate generals, their merits, etc. His biographer, who was his wife, wrote in detail of the motives and effects of her husband's conduct in that period. Neither ex-president nor biographer has told why or by what authority Section 8 of the act of March 6th, 1861, requiring that "the commissions issued shall bear one and the same date," five were issued, each with a different date.

General Johnston, from his headquarters at Centerville, promptly prepared an argument citing the law in his defense, held it two days in his pocket, to reassure himself of the moderation of the language and the correctness of his contention, and then sent it forward to the president.⁶ He argued, among other things, that the fact of confirmation by the provisional Congress of the nominations sent to it, in illegal discrimination, did not operate to displace the law, which protected him in the premises and made him the ranking general of the army. The president replied, with accustomed curttness, when displeased:

"RICHMOND, VA., September 14, 1861.

"General J. E. Johnston,

"Sir: I have received and read your letter of the 12th inst.

"The language is, as you say, unusual; its arguments and

⁶The full letter is found in Hughes' Johnston.

statements one-sided and its insinuations as unfounded as they are unbecoming.

"I am, etc.,

"JEFFERSON DAVIS."

Privately, the president gave his reason for his arbitrary fixing of the date of General J. E. Johnston's commission. The act the general relied upon to give him the highest rank referred only to officers who had come direct into the Confederate service from the United States army. Johnston had come direct from the army of the independent state of Virginia, the president contended. Lee ranked him in that state army.

The enactment of the provisional Congress was by six states. They had organized the government. The spirit of the law was in reasonable anticipation of the accession of Virginia, through the same preliminary process of temporary state isolation or secession, by which the other states had entered the government. In this sense, Virginia had not been independent. The object of the law was, the recognition of the honor of an officer, involved in his rank. A remaining obstacle, suggested by the president or his biographer, was that the act of the United States Congress, creating the new office of quartermaster-general, with the rank and pay of brigadier-general, was so jealous of efficiency of the incumbent that, to remove temptations from him to seek the field of glory in the battle's front, he was inhibited from field command. But the inhibition was qualified to permit the president, at will, to assign the quartermaster-general to command, and, if so assigned, he must carry with him his rank, brigadier-general.

The subject here is of sufficient weight to justify the attention given to it. The disturbance so brought about of the amicable relations of the parties to the dispute remained unbroken throughout their entire official connection under the Confederate government, and longer, through the succeeding disasters of its fall. They were most harmful to the great cause of the Confederacy.

Later in this month of September General Johnston

wrote to the president another letter of great historic weight. He called upon him to send the secretary of war to the army to discuss a plan of military operations before the winter set in. The army was idle, except outpost duty, of small consequence. The enemy had not as yet reorganized after the rout at Manassas. The army was in high fettle, ready for the march. The president came in person. He did not go to army headquarters, but to General Beauregard's quarters. Johnston promptly called on him there. The meeting took place at Fairfax Courthouse, Johnston, Beauregard and Major-General G. W. Smith present. The latter speaking for all, proposed that the scattered forces be concentrated there from the south, and the war be carried at once into the enemy's country and "fight it out there," he said. The generals asked for 60,000 men. The president replied that he could not withdraw troops from exposed points, nor call for recruits, as he had no arms for them. The enemy had abandoned in the flight from the late battleground twenty-eight pieces of artillery and about five thousand stands of small arms. The president was greatly disappointed to know how few captures of this kind had been made. The proposed forward and invasive movement could receive little of the needed assistance from that source. At that time the law of nations required a blockade to be effective. The law did not in its meaning apply to the ineffective blockade of the ports of the Confederacy. The government retained, for example, a commissioned officer of the army at the port of Wilmington, North Carolina, a virtual substitute for the civil officer, the collector, to control imports and exports. Until General Grant succeeded to command of all the invading armies, prisoners of war were freely exchanged. There is reason to suppose cotton could have been exchanged for general merchandise, up to that time, had the effort been made. At the time now under consideration, remittances to Huse, the purchasing agent, had ceased. The president was embarrassed and painfully confused by the unprepared state of military affairs.

General George B. McClellan, fresh from his triumphs

in West Virginia, was chosen to succeed the defeated McDowell. In six months from this elevation he had gathered on the Potomac 185,000 volunteers to confront Johnston, an enthusiastic army, equipped as army never was before, disciplined and devoted to their commander.

"Up jumped Abraham Lincoln, the rail-splitter, kicked the Constitution into the Capitol cellar and called for 75,000 men to march down and conquer the south; and when the 75,000 proved not enough, the rail-splitter called for more and more, until he had 2,000,000." This voice came from his people, at home.

No finer example of political mastery appears in American history than Lincoln in this crisis. "A perfect storm of denunciation broke over Mr. Lincoln's head. The whole north was angry; impeachment was threatened. Fremont was talked of as the man to put in his place."⁷ Lamon, his most intimate associate, wrote: "This opposition to Lincoln became more and more offensive. The leaders resorted to every means in their power to thwart him." The same purpose that had controlled him, to precipitate war by reinforcing Sumter, doubly inspired him now to prosecute war. The north was already desperate. Bitterness and confusion centered about the president's head. Wade, Trumbull, Zach Chandler, the eloquent Winter Davis, all senators and of the new political faith, were his open and relentless enemies.

Simon Cameron, Pennsylvania politician, was removed from the position of secretary of war. Edwin M. Stanton, of Virginia ancestry, born in Ohio, a Democrat all his life, a most active enemy of Lincoln, attorney general in Buchanan's cabinet to the hour of Lincoln's inauguration, took the place; next to Lincoln, the most unique man of the revolution.

Stanton took office about the middle of January, 1862. He was a man of great energy, moody temper and harsh speech. The cabinet meetings became frequent and the results unsatisfactory. The secretary of war wrote letters emphatically denouncing the president. He declared no

⁷Tarbell 2, 65.

hunter need go to Africa to catch a gorilla; one lived at Washington. He denounced the president to his face, in presence of officers of the government.⁸ He wrote of his desire that General McClellan be made military dictator and Lincoln be removed. The secretary became ardently attached to the general, or pretended to be. McClellan wrote to his wife daily and confidentially. He wrote now: "Stanton never speaks of the president in any way other than as 'that original gorilla.'" He often advises the propriety of my seizing the government."

Mr. Lincoln advanced boldly to encounter his numberless foes, within and without. He consulted no one, but issued an order that every army of the United States, confronting a Confederate armed force, must join battle on February 22d. The day of action must commemorate the anniversary of sentiment. Citizens of the republic left by Washington must go forth to set up, in blood and devastation, the foundations of the new nation.

General McClellan went in person to the president. He protested earnestly. He was not ready to move. His army was not prepared by discipline to risk a march into the heart of the Confederacy. The marching order was revoked.

Johnston, with the acute commander's forecast, had already made arrangements to remove his handful of men, 44,563, to another line. The order for the general movement for February 22d was revoked, and the order to McClellan to move by water down the Potomac to Urbana at the mouth of the Rappahannock, thence overland upon Richmond, was made in lieu.

Having weeks before sent his engineers to a chosen position on the south side of the Rappahannock, right across the proposed line of the enemy's march from Urbana upon Richmond, General Johnston began, on March 7th, to place his army behind the works they had constructed for occupation. On the 9th the bulk of the army had been placed behind the works. McClellan had promised his host that it should begin a forward movement on the 8th. He

⁸McClare.

gratified them. He marched the whole to Manassas, led them to Johnston's evacuated works, permitted them to see the "Quaker" guns,—black-painted pine logs Beauregard had mounted on earthworks,—and marched back whence he had come, declaring loudly that spies in Lincoln's cabinet meeting had revealed his secret and wrought the discomfiture of his strategy. Spies were, indeed, plentiful, intelligent and daring between Washington and the Confederate camp that winter. Ladies of quality were sometimes active in that service.

The withdrawal of Johnston from his winter camp was not unattended with serious sacrifices, although the enemy knew not of the movement until it was completed. Major-General Samuel G. French commanded a detachment of three or four thousand men at Evansport, charged with the duty of blockading the Potomac. Land batteries were constructed, and so effectively that the British minister, Lord Lyons, wrote to his government that Washington was, in fact, the only blockaded city in the United States. When the order came to French to withdraw, he saved all the public property except his heavy guns. Some of these he threw into the river and others he spiked, breaking the carriages.* The sacrifice, however, of commissary supplies was very serious. The commissary-general was among the appointments of his excellency, the commander-in-chief, who fell short of the high qualifications of his office. No commander had a good word for him. Lee was pronounced against him. Without the knowledge of the commander of the department, he put up a meat packery near the frontier; against his protest, he stored large quantities of bacon at Manassas. All these valuable stores were destroyed by Johnston because he could not move them and at the same time move the troops.

Grant had captured Henry and Donelson. The enemy occupied Nashville, and it was in these early days of April, 1862, that Shiloh was fought, the great victory won and lost, and the great other Scotch Johnston sacrificed. The Scotch

*Two Wars, p. 143.

blood did, indeed, play a wonderful part in American history, from first to last, until the autocracy of commerce, the get-rich-quick rule, began to subdue the genius of personal liberty. Jackson was in the Valley, by Johnston's orders, with plans that Johnston had formulated.¹⁰

McClellan failed in northern Virginia, put his army on boats to make Fort Monroe his base. The Confederates were aware of the movement immediately, but did not know whether it would be directed against Huger at Norfolk and his 7500 troops, or against the 11,000 of Magruder, below Williamsburg.

Johnston was made commander of the department, including the Peninsula and Norfolk. McClellan had with him some 112,000 men. On April 3d and 4th he landed 58,000 of these on the lower Peninsula, intending to assail Richmond from that point, about one hundred miles' march. He carried one hundred field-guns, of the longest range. Johnston had already anticipated the enemy and had started a part of the Army of Northern Virginia from its position on the Rappahannock to reinforce Magruder, and finally moved the remainder for the same purpose.

The following letter is a valuable record, going to show the daring conceptions of Johnston, the candor of his mind toward his superior officers and the intelligent decision of his purpose to favor an aggressive war as the sole alternative of Confederate success:

"HEADQUARTERS,

"LEE'S HOUSE, April 30, 1862.

"General R. E. Lee,

"General: We are engaged in a species of warfare at which we can never win.

"It is plain that General McClellan will adhere to the system of warfare adopted by him last summer, and depend for success upon artillery and engineering. We cannot compete with him in either.

"We must, therefore, change our course, take the offensive, collect all the troops we have in the east and cross the

¹⁰Hughes' Johnston.

Potomac with them, while Beauregard, with all he has in the west, invades Ohio.

"Our troops have always wished for the offensive, and so does the country. Please submit this suggestion to the president. We can have no success while McClellan is allowed, as he is by our defensive, to choose his mode of warfare.

"Most respectfully, your obedient servant,

"J. E. JOHNSTON,

"General.""¹¹

A few months before, the other great son of Scottish descent, A. S. Johnston, had replied to a prophecy of his young companion, that "the Yankees will not stand cold steel." He spoke with accustomed deliberation: "If we are to succeed, what we do must be done quickly. The longer we have them to fight, the more difficult they will be to defeat."

The White House, on the Pamunkey, the former property of Mrs. George Washington, then that of Mrs. R. E. Lee, was the "Lee's House" of the dateline of the letter. General Lee replied for the president. The view of strategy was commended, but the conditions in the Confederacy forbade the prosecution.

General Johnston mounted his horse at General Magruder's headquarters about dusk and galloping all night, covered the forty miles and reached the president's office by the hour of his appearance there after breakfast. Soliciting attention, he was reminded by Mr. Davis that the topic he had introduced was too important to be determined without the fullest discussion between his advisers. The general must come again at eleven o'clock. At that hour assembled the president, General George W. Randolph, secretary of war; General R. E. Lee, military adviser of the president, and the generals from the Army of Northern Virginia,—Johnston, Longstreet and G. W. Smith. Johnston decidedly, emphatically and briefly laid before the conference his proposition, namely, a change in the policy of conduct

¹¹Off. War Records.

of the war, in the instance present, a concentration of troops from the coast and other points where they were then distributed to create an army in the vicinity of Richmond sufficient to destroy McClellan, and, that end accomplished, to move forward in numbers so great that the enemy would be compelled to withdraw from the Confederacy in order to arrest, or strive to arrest, its progress.

The secretary of war, speaking first, objected. He had been an officer in the navy of the United States. He would not consent to abandon the seaports. The people there were entitled to protection. At Norfolk there was material for several warships. Johnston replied that the concentration of troops proposed would have the inevitable effect of relieving the ports, and all other threatened positions in the Confederacy, from the presence of the invader; that, except by concentrating its own limited strength, the Confederacy would not be able to prevent the appearance of the enemy at all or any of its positions; that the resources of the Confederacy would be exhausted and its armies destroyed piecemeal, by a defensive war, whereas an invasive war, even if unsuccessful, would cost only the army that was lost.

Substantially these suggestions contain the substance of the argument of the commanding general. The president said nothing to indicate the state of his mind. Longstreet did not speak. General Lee thought positions could be found on the Peninsula where the inferior force of the Confederates would be able to defeat the superior. General Smith had formed and expressed his opinion, favorable to Johnston's view, several months before at Manassas. The discussion continued until after midnight. At the end, the president decided in favor of General Lee's view.¹² Longstreet kept his silence. Before now he had advised the government not to send the Army of Northern Virginia to the Peninsula but to the Valley. He would leave Magruder to dally with McClellan's host, while Johnston, taking in Jackson's force, already in that region, would drive Banks and the others out, cross the Potomac and thus compel

¹²Johnston's Narrative.

McClellan to retire from operations intended to threaten the safety of Richmond.¹³

General Johnston returned to the army at once, followed by his lieutenants. Yorktown, having been made beyond doubt untenable by reason of the bombardment from the enemy's batteries, out of reach of Confederate artillery, was evacuated at night without loss, except in guns too heavy to be transported a long distance over bad roads.

Norfolk, in the rear, could not be held. Huger, with 7500 fine troops there, received orders to destroy public property and march to Richmond. The proud mistress of the sea, the ram "Virginia," had been moved up the James and her armor stripped, in hope to lighten her draft, that she might pass farther on. Water with sufficient depth could not be found at Crany Island. The wonderful vessel was burned. She was a product of Confederate genius entirely. The plan was submitted to the cabinet, sitting at Montgomery, by Secretary of the Navy Mallory.¹⁴

It was a splendid soldiery under Johnston, the original twelve months' men, the flower of southern youth. A more enviable command no chieftain ever marshalled in battle array. What noble lieutenants had he—Longstreet, D. H. Hill, Wilcox, Early, Pickett, Wade Hampton, Hood, Magruder, J. E. B. Stuart, Robert E. Rodes! No leader was ever more trusted, no army freer of bickering within itself. All felt the mastery of the commander.

Here military science was invited to its loftiest sphere. The York and the James were too wide for the range of Confederate ordnance, planted on either bank, this being true of the latter in the lower part. General McClellan intended with a part of his army to hold Johnston on his front, on the land, while he used transports to place the other part between the Confederates and Richmond. To prevent this imminent peril to both the army and the capital, Johnston must reach, in retreat, a point where the advantage of navigation would cease to the foe. This safe point was

¹³From Manassas to Appomattox.

¹⁴Reagan's Memoirs.

not to be found except within twenty-five miles or less of Richmond.

Williamsburg was reached at midday, May 4th. By this time McClellan had occupied Yorktown, fifteen miles eastward, and was using the York to transport a part of his vast army to intervene between Johnston and Richmond. Johnston had no thought of being caught in the trap laid for him. In the afternoon he marched out of Williamsburg, with Magruder in the lead and G. W. Smith following, D. H. Hill and Longstreet bringing up the rear, four grand divisions in all. The enemy's cavalry approached Longstreet late in the afternoon of the 4th, but there was no serious fighting. That night Longstreet moved into some old works Magruder had built. He was fiercely attacked by Hooker the next morning. D. H. Hill came back and Johnston rode back. The fight lasted all day, the Confederates with twenty-two regiments and the enemy with thirty-six. The enemy lost five guns and 2239 men; the Confederates lost 1560 men. The Confederates withdrew unmolested. That night they continued the retreat to the south bank of the Chickahominy.

The Chickahominy is a muddy stream, rising in northern Virginia, flowing southeast down the Peninsula until, at about half the length of that territory, it turns south abruptly, entering the James below Lower Brandon. The Pamunky runs in approximately parallel lines with the Chickahominy, until it enters the York at West Point. The Confederate retreat ceased on the east bank of the Chickahominy, twenty-five miles east of Richmond. McClellan's base was on the Pamunky, at the White House, "Lee's House."

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In various respects the Confederate campaign now closed was a grave disappointment. The Peninsula, which possessed historic claims upon the public sentiment of the south, and especially upon the pride of Virginia, had been abandoned.

The remains of Jamestown yet stood there. At James-

town was the earliest assembly of civil government in America. The war between Governor Berkeley and Nathaniel Bacon was on the Peninsula; the colonial homes, Westover and others, were there. Williamsburg, the capital, and William and Mary College were there. There Patrick Henry had set the ball of revolution in motion, May, 1763, by the magic spell of his oratory: "As for me, give me liberty or give me death!" Yorktown closed the struggle that Henry had opened. All this had been abandoned to the tramp of an insolent invader. Why?

A little while before, General Johnston had asked for 60,000 troops to invade the north, and there triumph—or forever fail. He had 55,000 now with him, but he refused battle, in self-defense. From his youth up General Johnston had won the favor of all by his perfect valor; he bore many scars from the front of battle; he had commanded on the recent glorious field of First Manassas, and men with him now had seen him there seize a regiment flag and lead the troops into the thickest of the storm.

The enemy came up the James with five gunboats to a point to the right rear of the army, between the army and Richmond. The army was led across the Chickahominy, to defeat the purpose of the gunboats, and on, out of the swamps, to the hills, nearer the capital to find water and dry land.

The president, unaware of the change, invited Postmaster General Reagan to ride, in the afternoon, some twenty-five miles to the army. The two proceeded through the suburbs and on through Rockets. Reagan explained that some tents in the distance were those of Hood's brigade, and that the brick house was the commanding general's headquarters. The president was greatly surprised. Visibly irritated, but in silence, with one of his staff at his side, he turned off to the house. There he asked to be informed whether Richmond was to be defended, now that the army was but five miles away. The general was reserved. He could make no pre-engagement to fight a battle, the presumption being that the obligation of his

office was, war. He would explain the change of position from the swamps of the Chickahominy to the dry hills nearer the capital. Malaria and bad water had compelled it. Johnston never considered the holding of any position an emergency of this war. Defense of Richmond, from a strictly strategical point, was extremely difficult, if not wholly impracticable, for the numerically inferior army, indifferently equipped. The president assured the general that if he could receive no definite assurance that a battle was to be fought to save the city, under the present commander, he would put one there to fight.¹⁵ Johnston did not hesitate to say to friendly citizens that, unless he could fight a decisive battle, he would not waste his army by an unprofitable one.

The president sent his family off to North Carolina for safety, and with them he sent some of the more valuable records of the government. The cabinet and General Lee were called. The general adviser was asked to name a new line for the army, if it was withdrawn from that then occupied. Lee named one,—the Staten River,—but, he added: "Richmond must not be given up—it shall not be given up," and as he spoke tears dropped upon his cheeks.

It was easy marching from Fredericksburg to the right wing of McClellan's army, and at Fredericksburg lay McDowell with thousands of unemployed soldiers. It was easier for McDowell, then, to join McClellan than it was, a month later, for Stonewall Jackson to come to the left wing of Lee from the Valley. McClellan confronted Johnston with two men to one. On May 21st, 1862, Johnston's army, near Richmond, numbered 60,688 effectives; McClellan's, May 20th, 102,236 effectives.

News had come in, following the magnificent Confederate victory of April 6 at Shiloh, thrown away the next day, of Jackson and the Valley campaign. Johnston's army was keen for battle. McClellan prepared to receive McDowell. For this purpose, he moved his right wing, under Fitzjohn Porter, 12,000 strong, toward Hanover Court House. Brigadier-General Branch, with 5000, encountered

¹⁵Reagan's Memoirs.

him, but was driven back. On May 28th Brigadier-General Rodes made reconnoissance in force toward the Chickahominy. Keyes and Heintzleman, each with a corps d'armée had boldly crossed the river to the Confederate side. Johnston waited to see them separate themselves from the main army more and more, but they threw up field-works to protect themselves where they were. Opportunely, a heavy rainfall on the night of May 30th flooded the Chickahominy. Johnston had already issued his order of battle, the plan being to fight the two corps, separated by the river from their main body, with all his army on May 31st.

Longstreet, in command of the attacking force, was to operate on the enemy's right. Huger, with the Norfolk troops, was to open on the enemy's left and force the fighting. Longstreet would take up the battle and the whole army would precipitate itself against the enemy, divided by the impassable river. Huger did not open. He never got into the day. Rodes had marched his brigade over the same road. The flood had carried off a bridge over a canal or small stream. Rodes' men forded it, up to their armpits. Huger's men failed to cross. They could not get the artillery over, they said.

The general commanding rode with Major-General G. W. Smith's division. Smith was next in rank and Whiting commanded his division. The battle raged all the afternoon. It opened with the advance of D. H. Hill's division upon the division of Casey. The fighting was vigorous, the enemy partly entrenched and the Confederates led by Rodes, Garland and Anderson. The soft land made the use of artillery difficult, but Bondurant's Alabama battery and Carter's Virginia were very effective. The foe was driven. In the midst of the struggle, D. H. Hill sent a member of his staff, Major John William Tayloe, of Alabama, to Longstreet to tell of the critical situation. He asked for help. Tayloe, crossing the fields at full run, struck a wide ditch or canal. His powerful black gelding failed to clear it, and when he succeeded in clambering to the upper bank, horse and rider were a mass of yellow mud. In this plight he reached Longstreet, sitting his

horse in the middle of the road in a brown study. The message was delivered in forcible terms. The general seemed oblivious to its import. He turned his eye neither to the right nor left. In moody tone, his only words of attention were: "Tell General Hill to hold his own."

The president, accompanied by Postmaster-General Reagan and others, rode to the field as the battle raged. A house lay between the enemy's line and some troops of Hood's. Shell were falling in Hood's ranks and were flying above and around the house. Reagan rode to the place and sent a message to General Johnston, who had just ridden up, dismounted and walked in, praying him not to expose himself so recklessly. The general merely replied: "This is no time to seek safe places." An hour later, just as the battle was closing for the day, and as the general, on horseback, was giving directions for the renewal of the fight the next morning and ordering the army to sleep in line on its arms, a rifle ball struck the upper section of his arm, immediately followed by a fragment of shell, which struck his breast. This latter missile broke his ribs and unhorsed him, leaving him unconscious. The stretcher bearing his apparently lifeless body passed near the president, who rode to it, dismounted and expressed deep pain at the accident. He gave General Lee, who was near, an order to take command of the army at once.

Johnston was taken to a private residence in Richmond. General Lee wrote as follows, from the field:

"NEAR RICHMOND, JUNE 2, 1862.

"My dear Mrs. Johnston: I am so grieved at the general's wound, on his account, yours and the country's. I heard of it on the field, but he was carried from it before I could get to him. I called at his quarters on my way back to the city last night, afterwards sent to the Spottswood, but could hear nothing of him. I was very glad to hear yesterday Dr. Gibson's report of him and trust he may suffer only temporary inconvenience. You must soon cure him. In the meantime, the president has thought it neces-

sary that I should take his place. I wish I was able, or that his mantle had fallen on an abler man. Remember me kindly to him and tell him he has my sincere sympathy. Please, when you can, let me know how he recovers.

"Very truly and respectfully yours,
"R. E. LEE."

The Confederate loss in the battle was 6134; the invader's, a thousand less. The Confederate loss was irreparable and the beginning of ultimate exhaustion. They held the field, with ten field-pieces and more than six thousand stands of arms. They here began to "wear themselves out whipping the other fellow."

The orders of the commanding general to open the battle at sunrise on May 31st were grossly neglected for ten hours. The movement of the divisions on the field, as planned by him, remained unexecuted the whole day. His orders to the troops to sleep on their arms that night meant that he would see the beginning of the action at daylight, June 1st. It was common talk among the troops that the disabling of their commander alone prevented a decisive victory the next day.

General McClellan reported a great victory. Commerce on his rear flourished on greenbacks. Farmers prospered on sales of farm products and of horses to the army in ever augmenting supply. The invading army was the best supplied and equipped the world ever saw. The leader was a young man of great ability, a fine gentleman. His subordinates were educated young soldiers who were not politicians.

A characteristic anecdote, told by his biographer, must be repeated. When Johnston fell from his horse, the revolutionary sword his father had worn and a pair of revolvers the inventor, Colt, had given to him dropped to the ground. They were left there as he was removed. In the first moment of returning consciousness, he made inquiry for his arms. A young courier of his headquarters, Drury Armistead, volunteered to go back to search for them; at the risk of his life he recovered all. The general, applauding his fidelity, presented him with one of the

pistols. A similar incident may be related which will serve to attest the highbred courtesy of the man. In the winter, at Centreville, General Johnston saw from his quarters the colonel of a regiment going out to the picket line. Although it rained, raining hard, the officer wore no waterproof. Calling him to the door, the general handed out a rain-coat, saying, in apologetic tone, "I have two."

The first week in November, 1862, five months after his wound, General Johnston was able to mount his horse for moderate exercise. Two weeks later, he reported for duty, though unfit. The secretary of war, Randolph, informed him that Department Number Two had been created for him, headquarters at Chattanooga, and the territory inclusive of all between the Savannah and Mississippi rivers and the Kentucky southern boundary and the gulf. If Mr Lincoln's conception of strategical points was correct, as surely it was, the possession of Chattanooga by the Confederacy was more important to it than the possession of Richmond. General Johnston fully appreciated that proposition of high strategy. He would have preferred to remain with the Army of Northern Virginia, from which he had been removed by honorable wounds. He considered a due regard for military ethics would restore him to that army, where he was universally trusted and beloved. Nevertheless, when the secretary made the assignment to another field of duty, he promptly accepted and at once demonstrated his zeal in the premises. Reviewing the disposition of troops in the new department, he found three armies, one under Bragg at Murfreesboro, another under Dabney Maury at Mobile, the third under Lieutenant-General J. C. Pemberton in Mississippi.

In Missouri and Arkansas Lieutenant-General Holmes had about 40,000 fine troops, apparently unemployed. It was not considered impracticable to transfer them to the east side of the Mississippi. Johnston proposed to the secretary that the transfer should be made, that Pemberton should be brought to Bragg, with the greater part of his army. These, united with Bragg, making at least

100,000 seasoned men, should drive Rosecrans out of Nashville and on beyond the Ohio. He held that Grant would immediately leave Memphis and northern Mississippi and west Tennessee with all his troops as soon as Nashville and Kentucky were relieved of Rosecrans. A similar transfer, that of Van Dorn, had been made by A. S. Johnston in the spring before.

Rosecrans had the largest army, the army that was expected to go to Atlanta, and as Mississippi and Tennessee could not both be held, the proper concentration was, one against him, the strongest resistant.

Mr. Randolph listened attentively. When the general had developed his plan, he stepped to his desk and drew from it an order issued a few days previously to Holmes to bring his army immediately to the east side of the Mississippi. Then the secretary exposed the order of the president, countermanding the order to Holmes.¹⁶

Command of the new department was a fiasco from the start. The assignment resulted in the practical elimination of Johnston from the military situation for the entire calendar year, 1863.

¹⁶Johnston's Narrative.

CHAPTER XV

1864

THE DALTON-ATLANTA CAMPAIGN

The most prominent feature of the war and a useful lesson for all persons who may hereafter elect for their calling the profession of arms.

MAJOR-GENERAL JOSEPH HOOKER.

Johnston had the most exalted reputation with our old army as a strategist.

MAJOR-GENERAL W. T. SHERMAN.

Take it all in all, the south in my opinion, had no better soldier than Joe Johnston, certainly none that gave me more trouble.

LIEUTENANT-GENERAL U. S. GRANT.

Without one-half the number of federals he (Johnston) contrived to hold them back, led though they were with as versatile skill and unwearied energy as the records of modern war can hardly match.

COLONEL CHESNEY, *British Army*.

On December 1st, from army headquarters at Dalton, General Bragg wrote to Adjutant-General Samuel Cooper, at Richmond: "I shall relinquish command to-morrow. It will not do for me to remain," etc. The next day he issued a feeling address to the army and turned command over to Lieutenant-General Hardee. The president wished Hardee to accept appointment to permanent command but, honest with himself, the lieutenant-general confessed his want of confidence in the originality of his mental powers for the exigencies of the military situation. He preferred Johnston. After two weeks' deliberation, with reluctance the president by his own hand appointed Johnston, then idle in Mississippi.¹

General Bragg asked to be ordered to a designated military post near Atlanta. He soon received the following notice of promotion and assignment to duty:

¹Rise and Fall of the Confederate Government, 2, 561.

"ADJUTANT AND INSPECTOR-GENERAL'S OFFICE,
"Richmond, February 24, 1864.

"*General Orders*

"No. 23

"General Braxton Bragg is assigned to duty at the seat of government, and, under the direction of the president, is charged with the conduct of military operations in the armies of the Confederacy."

General Lee had occupied the similar nondescript position for several months. Writing confidentially to his wife, he said of it: "The position is neither of pleasure to me nor of advantage to the country."

The strength and distribution of the Confederate army January 1st, 1864, was as follows:

Army of Northern Virginia, and Early in the Valley, 60,000; Army of Tennessee, and Longstreet in east Tennessee, 60,000; with Beauregard and in North Carolina, 35,000; Maury and Pillow in Alabama, 6000; Polk and Forrest in Mississippi, 18,000; Holmes, trans-Mississippi department, 40,000. Total effectives, 219,000.

Troops actually enrolled in the war by the United States up to this time were 1,421,833. This number was subsequently increased, raising the total to 2,678,967.² Present for duty, equipped and invading the Confederacy, January 1, 1864, there were, the Army of the Potomac, say, 120,000; the army at Chattanooga, about 80,000, with armies at Nashville, Memphis, Vicksburg, New Orleans, in Texas, making a grand aggregate of 533,000.³

All armies of invasion were liable to replace their casualties from garrisons at Washington, in Kentucky, in Ohio and Missouri, immediately on demand.

The winter of 1863-64, and the war period is two-thirds gone. The military prowess is with the Confederacy and not with the invader. Like a trained and hardened athlete, the southern army challenged the burden of denials

²Rise and Fall of the Confederate Government, 2, 706.

³General Horace Porter, *Century Mag.*, Nov., 1896.

offered to it. Confederate ports were closed finally, but General Josiah Gorgas, chief of ordnance, opened a way sufficient to the emergency. He built a great arsenal at Selma, the terminus of the railroad that ran by a blast furnace that made the incomparable Alabama iron: he had an arsenal at Richmond and another in North Carolina; he built a powder mill at Augusta; his inquiries led to the invention, by a common soldier of the Army of Northern Virginia, of an improved percussion cap machine, more effective than any known; he found a fulminate in the soil along the James river and he sent to the many small distilleries for copper kettles to be melted. There were scores of improved field-pieces, captured in battle; the infantry was fairly well armed; hardly a mounted man who did not carry a first-class revolver and ride a horse fully equipped from spurs to bridle-bit, supplied at first hand by the enemy to its own and transferred under the usages and rules of the battlefield.

The Confederacy represented in the civil government was bisected and the third part of the territory was possessed by the foe. The inhabitants were confident, resolute and true. *Nil desperandum* was the universal shibboleth sent forth from homes to the men on the front.

The popularity of the war had waned in the United States. On the first great field of carnage, Manassas, July 21st, 1861, it is related a sorely wounded soldier, left behind by the fleeing ranks of the invader, while awaiting the hospital stretcher, exclaimed: "What is this for!" The answer began to be insufficient to satisfy, now that the enormous commerce of the home population began to lose its clerks, its masters, its producers by draft for army service. Army quartermasters entered the market for farmers' teams and cattle, and wagons, and harness, with government paper money only; army commissaries called for flour and coffee, offering paper money only. The government must sell interest-bearing, non-taxable bonds, a practical mortgage on the productive capacity of the people, to recover possession of the currency, to be expended again

for fresh supplies for the army and to be recovered again by sale of new government bonds.

There was a universal call in every district for a reduction of the draft. The famous editor, Medill, went from Chicago to plead with Mr. Lincoln for reduction. July 11th, 1863, the draft was begun in the city of New York. All next day, Sunday, men between twenty and forty-five years gathered in bands and coteries, with defiant speech. Monday they were ready. A fierce and bloody riot broke out. A thousand were believed to have been killed and thousands more maimed and torn. Governor Seymour, the Democrat, had been long known to oppose the war. Now he was openly charged with fomenting resistance to the draft. Lincoln stood firm. Submitting to the resistance of his order for a few days, he sent Major-General B. F. Butler, with 10,000 troops to enforce the draft. The president stood firm at great trial, however. "Day by day," says his biographer, Miss Tarbell, "he grew more haggard, the lines in his face deepened, it became ghastly gray in color. Sometimes he would say, 'I shall never be glad again.'"

From all quarters numerous and bitter were the denunciations of the president. "In 1864, the awful brutality of the war came upon the people as never before. There was a revolution of feeling against the sacrifice going on. All complaints that had been urged against Mr. Lincoln broke out afresh; the draft was talked about as if it were the arbitrary freak of a tyrant. It was declared that Lincoln had violated constitutional rights, declared that he had violated personal liberty and the liberty of the press. The despair, the indignation of the country in this dreadful time was all centered on Mr. Lincoln."⁴

"Northern men with southern principles" were yet in New York and Boston. The "yardstick democracy" had not recovered the fruitful commerce lost by the war and were still attached to their ancient faith in the abounding southern trade.

A powerful opposition to the war developed in the upper Mississippi valley states. Stephen A. Douglas, in his old hatred of Lincoln, reflected a more enduring temper than he could now pacify. "Sons of Liberty," wearing copper-head badges, were plentiful in Ohio, Indiana and Illinois. They numbered tens of thousands, yes, hundreds of thousands, and they spoke openly for peace.

The strategy adopted by the Confederate commander, in the Dalton-Atlanta campaign, was not determined by the activities of revolt in the rear of Sherman, but that campaign bears a most important relation to the life of the Confederacy, because of the peril to Sherman from those demonstrations at his base, in his rear, and among the friends and kinsmen of his best soldiers. There was not a negro soldier in front of Johnston.

President Davis, knowing of the "Sons of Liberty," and that they were led by Clement L. Vallandigham, an able and firm representative in Congress and a candidate for governor of Ohio, sent Messrs. C. C. Clay, Jr., of Alabama, and Jacob Thompson, of Mississippi, both eminent citizens, to Toronto, Canada, to promote the rapidly growing western discord. The apparent promise was a northwestern Confederacy, the incident, release of the Confederate prisoners; arm these veterans, then drive the United States military authorities out of the northwest; finally, a northwestern republic. A large fund was subscribed in New York city to aid the revolution.⁵ Mr. Thompson, from his point of observation, Toronto, reported to President Davis: "The rank and file are weary of the war, but the violent abolitionists, preachers, contractors and political press, are clamorous for its continuance. If Lee can hold his own in front of Richmond and Johnston defeat Sherman in Georgia, prior to the election (November 1st, 1864), it seems probable that Lincoln will be defeated."⁶

The military strength of the Confederacy was sufficient, in the winter of 1863-64, to justify the perfect confidence

⁵Headley.

⁶Ibid.

then felt by the army and the people. The assistance, direct or indirect, from discontent in the north, just described, depended upon the operations of the Army of Tennessee in the campaign against Sherman. We shall now relate another element of unused, but surely available, strength.

In the last days of December, 1863, as General Johnston took command at Dalton, his officers were greatly encouraged by his presence and the earnest and intelligent administrative acts which he instantly brought to bear upon Bragg's recently defeated and demoralized troops. General Cleburne was yet with his division in camp at Tunnel Hill, ten miles on the front. He was observed by his staff to be employed at every leisure moment in preparing a manuscript of many pages.

Finally he sent, through his corps commander, Hardee, an invitation to the general officers of all grades, including the general commanding, and all the regimental commanders, to assemble at army headquarters on the early evening of January 2d, 1864. There Cleburne read to the astounded audience the paper he had prepared: (1) Slavery had become a military weakness to the Confederacy because the plantations were liable to invasion and recruits were taken from the slaves, who willingly enlisted for bounty and emancipation, thereby swelling the ranks of the invaders; (2) President Davis ordered that the army be increased by bringing back all men improperly absent, by forbidding substitutes, by putting in the ranks all hospital and train details; but if all this be done and all exempt below eighteen and above forty-five, able to bear arms, be conscripted, in twelve months these enumerated sources of supply would be exhausted. "Through lack of system," he wrote, "the fruits of our struggles and sacrifices have invariably slipped away from us and left us nothing but long lists of dead and mangled. Our soldiers can see no end to this state of affairs except in our own exhaustion."

The paper presented the situation with clearness and eloquence. The ominous prophecy was sent forth: the south must now choose between independence and the abolition of slavery. Should the slaves be enlisted in the Con-

federate army, win the Confederate battles and be set free, or should they enlist in the United States army, to conquer the Confederacy? If freed, the Confederacy would at once have numbers equal to or superior to the invader; it would have a reserve sufficient for all purposes; it would move its armies forward and forage in the enemy's country. Northern abolitionists and their Exeter Hall sympathizers would lose their whole argument for war, northern soldiers would abandon their colors and foreign nations would rush to get southern cotton and recognize the Confederacy in the family of nations.

The paper was an elaborate argument. Taking the officers by surprise, it created a profound sensation. General Johnston and Lieutenant-General Hardee, who were present, seemed to assent, but were silent. As the meeting dissolved, the officers who were present developed wide differences of opinion. A favorite officer, Major-General W. H. T. Walker, a Georgian, announced on the spot his condemnation; the paper was "incendiary" and must be sent forward to the War Department. He called on Cleburne for a copy and the avowal of his authorship. He received prompt compliance with all his demands. Walker requested General Johnston to forward his copy, through official channels, but the general declined; the paper was political and not military.

This action of the general commanding greatly disappointed Cleburne. He declared his readiness to surrender the splendid division he commanded to take a division of negroes. The Helots of Sparta had fought; the galley slaves of Lepanto had made good soldiers; the brutal West Indian African slaves had been too much for the French in battle.

Brigadier-General Patton Anderson, a Floridian, young and of excellent reputation, had heard the paper read in meeting. He wrote at once to his friend and monitor, Lieutenant-General Polk, then absent with his command, in Mississippi. He resented the suggestions of the paper bitterly. It proposed an unnecessary and disgraceful surrender of the whole question at issue with the north, this

young general declared. He urged Polk to interfere; to write to Richmond, that the Confederacy required no such extreme resort.

The argument for enlistment of negroes in the Confederate army seemed to be justified in the perfect fidelity to their masters of the thousands of negro slave body-servants carried by officers and at first by many privates into camp. This loyalty was unbroken and was as remarkable as true. Negro servants in the army never deserted.

Major-General Cleburne and Brigadier-General Govan, of Arkansas, signed the paper, and Brigadier-General Lowery, of Mississippi, also Brigadier-General John H. Kelley, of Wheeler's cavalry. Ten others, colonels, lieutenant-colonels and majors, signed it.

General Walker sent his copy to the government, and there it created a downright consternation. By order of the president, the valetudinarian secretary of war, Seddon, wrote to General Johnston in vigorous denunciation. The thing must be suppressed, discussion of it forbidden in the army and the press denied circulation of it. Congress itself had no authority to emancipate slaves.⁷

The day after the meeting, General Johnston wrote from Dalton direct to the president:

"I can see no other mode of taking the offensive here than to beat the enemy when he advances and then move forward. But to make victory probable, the army must be strengthened. A ready mode of doing this would be by substituting negroes for all soldiers on detailed or daily duty, as well as company cooks, pioneers and laborers for engineer service. This would give us at once ten or twelve thousand men and the other armies of the Confederacy might be strengthened in the same proportion. Immediate and judicious legislation would be necessary, however."

⁷By act of Congress, fourteen and a half months later, the exact proposition of Cleburne was ratified. It was then too late to be of avail. When news of the collapse of the Confederacy reached Alabama, Brigadier-General John T. Morgan, one among many such recruiting officers, was in charge of a camp in the "canebrake" region of Alabama recruiting negro slaves, and of the author's knowledge with success.

The government, in trepidation, suppressed the Cleburne memorial and its wisdom. No attention was given to the counsel of the general of the Army of Tennessee.

News of the Cleburne argument escaped camp and made a profound impression. On October 13th of the same year the governors of the two Carolinas, Georgia, Alabama and Mississippi, formally met at Augusta, Georgia, to discuss the question of enlisting slaves in the army. The meeting passed a resolution of sympathy with the Cleburne paper. Governor Watts of Alabama, however, who for two years had been attorney general in the president's cabinet, was not present, having been suddenly called home before action was taken by his associate governors. When the Alabama General Assembly met in November, the governor informed the body of the Augusta meeting and of his unqualified condemnation of the resolution. He could discover no emergency of the Confederacy calling for emancipation of slaves. The cause was assured. At that time, however, the General Assembly was in straits for money to feed destitute families of soldiers, Hood had evacuated Atlanta and was wrecking the Army of Tennessee at rapid rate. General Lee was standing siege at Petersburg within ten miles of Grant's base, at City Point, and several hundred miles from his own base in the south and southwest.

It is interesting to note that this noble governor of Alabama had come to his office from Mr. Davis's cabinet, with the views of that cabinet and the chief executive on the military situation; that he, too, was a life-long Whig and had voted for the extreme Union candidates, Bell and Everett, in 1860. Alabama had no nobler son than he, nevertheless.

William Porcher Miles, former representative in the Congress of the United States from Charleston, South Carolina district, and from the beginning a member of the Confederate States Congress, wrote from Richmond to General Beauregard. The legislator asked the soldier for information with regard to military affairs and for counsel.

Beauregard wrote feelingly in reply: "I think gross injustice is done by the administration and its *entourage* to General (J. E.) Johnston. They have tied a leaden weight to his feet and then told him to see what he could do in a rapid stream."⁸

Former United States Senator and present Confederate States Senator Pierre Soule, from Louisiana, called upon General Beauregard to suggest for the senator's information a plan of campaign to relieve Georgia and Tennessee from the tramp of the invading host. Beauregard replied:

"I am sensibly aware of our limited means, our want of men and appliances of war, and of transportation, and hence the difficulties which will embarrass us in this plan (of sudden and rapid concentration upon some selected, decisive strategic point), but I see no way to success except through and by it. A different course may, indeed, protract the contest, which will become day by day more unequal. We may fight—stoutly, as hitherto—many more bloody and indecisive battles, but will never win a signal, conclusive victory until we can manage to throw a heavy and overwhelming mass of our forces upon the fractions of the enemy," etc.

Beauregard's plan was to concentrate upon the Army of Tennessee the following reinforcements:

From Alabama and Mississippi, 10,000; from Beauregard's department, 8000; from North Carolina, 2000; from Virginia, 20,000; from Longstreet, in east Tennessee, 10,000. Total, 50,000. Other detachments would raise that army to 100,000 of as fine soldiers as the world ever saw. He would require the press to keep quiet while the concentration proceeded. This force would crush Grant, then at Chattanooga, before he could come out to oppose it and, well handled, it would cross the Ohio river and thus recall all the invading host from the southwest.

"If this plan be decided on, the commander for its execution," continues the letter, "must be invested with an

⁸Off. War Records.

unrestricted, unembarrassed selection of staff officers, and thoroughly emancipated from the least subordination to the views and control of the heads of bureaus at Richmond, a reproduction in this war of that fatal Austrian system with which no eminently successful commander ever had to contend—a pernicious plan of administration which will clog and hamper the highest military genius, whether of a Napoleon or a Cæsar. I believe the success of the plan of campaign thus sketched and the utter defeat of the enemy would be almost certain.”⁹

The dates of these letters from General Beauregard on military conditions were shortly preceding the assignment of Johnston to command. We now come to another historic suggestion of similar character. The two taken together, made originally without any concert of opinion, by commanders of remote armies, become in the highest degree important to the history of the war and of the Confederacy.

Having provided for the support of his troops in east Tennessee, as best he could, General Longstreet, in February, 1864, took the train, by way of Bristol and Lynchburg, for a brief visit to his wife and infant son (Robert Lee, a few days old), at Petersburg. Thence he hastened to General Lee’s quarters on the Rappahannock. There he lost no time in disclosing to his old commander his mature opinion that the life of the Confederacy was passing away, in neglect of the true science of war by the controlling authorities. General Lee listened and requested his trusted lieutenant to carry his plan to the president. Longstreet answered that if Lee thought well enough of the plan to advise submission to the head of the government, he (Lee) should take it thither in person; that he (Longstreet) was not in favor with the authorities at Richmond.

So the two went together and the essence of the plan was this: From the forts about Charleston, and the whole south Atlantic coast, 20,000 troops should be taken, under command of Beauregard in person, and they should rendezvous and wait in the upper part of South Carolina;

⁹Off. War Records.

troops under Polk in Mississippi, under Maury at Mobile, should rendezvous in northern Mississippi and wait: General Lee should fall back behind intrenchments at Richmond, which would be sufficiently manned with about half his army; the remainder should join Longstreet in east Tennessee.

These dispositions made, General Johnston should take command of the Army of Tennessee and, moving by the left flank to northern Mississippi or northern Alabama, unite with Polk's and Maury's troops and cross the Tennessee; then Longstreet, from east Tennessee and Beau-regard from the upper part of South Carolina would march for central Kentucky. Fighting was to be avoided until all of the converging columns should meet in Kentucky and come under command of General Johnston, at least 120,000 seasoned veterans representing every state of the Confederacy, an army unsurpassed in achievements in the history of wars.

The president, Secretary of War Seddon, General Bragg, chief of staff to the president, and the two visiting generals met in the executive office. General Lee presented the plan. The president listened and spoke little. General Bragg made a few observations. The secretary of war spoke freely. The secretary objected to the reduction of the Army of Northern Virginia, upon which, he said, the safety of Richmond depended. General Lee was positive and forceful. He received no encouragement. Longstreet said nothing. Describing the event upon which the existence of the Confederacy seemed to depend, Longstreet, speaking of Lee's agitation, says: "He wore his beard full but neatly trimmed. He pulled it nervously, as time and silence grew, until at last his suppressed emotion was conquered. The profound quiet of a minute or more seemed an hour. When he spoke, it was of other matters, but the air was troubled by his efforts to surrender hopeful anticipations to the caprices of empirics. He rose to take leave of the august presence, gave his hand to the president and bowed himself out of the council chamber. His associate went

through the same form and no one approached the door to offer parting courtesy."¹⁰

The scene was the trial and judgment; the final decree against the offer of the science of war to bring into the life of the Confederacy the country's native potency of resource.

The legislature of Georgia convened at Milledgeville and Governor Brown was ready with an interesting message. It must be plain, the governor wrote, to the United States that the Confederacy could not be conquered. He believed a proper diplomacy could stop the war. He would not accept unconditional peace. He considered the south in all respects in a sounder condition than the north. The election of president approached. A monster meeting in New York city had recently denounced Lincoln. Wendell Phillips, the abolition orator; Secretary Chase, of his cabinet; Stanton, secretary of war; Senator Wade, Winter Davis, Governor Andrew of Massachusetts, denounced Mr. Lincoln. The governor of Georgia knew his state was about to be bisected by a military campaign, but he believed that the issue would not be against the Confederacy.

. . .

The day before Johnston issued his order taking command at Dalton, Hardee sent Wheeler with some 1200 men to overtake a wagon train of supplies sent by Grant from Chattanooga, to Burnside, at Knoxville.

The expedition rode out of camp on the afternoon of the same day, December 27th. Riding all night in rain and sleet, it accomplished the forty miles by ten o'clock of the 28th and came upon the rear of the train near Charleston. General P. H. Sheridan, by orders, awaited with a heavy force on the north bank of the Hiawassee to receive Wheeler's expected attack on the train. He had sent pickets two or three miles out on the road on which the Confederates were marching.

¹⁰From Manassas to Appomattox, p. 546.

Kelly charged these pickets and drove them before him. Sheridan came over to the south side with force to support them. Meantime, the bulk of the train passed over to the north side of the Hiawassee. Kelly met Sheridan, but after some fighting Wheeler found Kelly not strong enough and recalled him.

This was the situation when the enemy, with cavalry and infantry enough to attack Wheeler full in front and on the flanks at the same time, threw his force into confusion. Colonel W. B. Wade, of the 8th Confederate, commanding a brigade, received the enemy. Wheeler and Kelly rode among the troops encouraging them with great gallantry and they were rallied.¹¹ Colonel Wade was put under arrest but never brought to trial. He was transferred to Forrest, where he continued to win laurels. Perhaps the gunboat expedition, earlier in the year, was not forgotten.

Wheeler had captured a part of the train left on the south side of the river, and twenty of the guard. In the fighting just described he lost the captured wagons, but held the prisoners.

It will be remembered the bulk of Wheeler's cavalry was yet under Major-General Will T. Martin, with Longstreet in east Tennessee. Under official report of January 28th, 1864, General Martin said of his command: "A very large proportion of men, and even officers, are ragged and barefooted, without blankets or overcoats. A very large number of my horses are unshod. The men have received no pay for six months."

In troublous days of France, a coterie of gentlemen of Paris sat talking over the events by the evening lamp. The cry resounded, "General Bonaparte has landed from Egypt!" Instantly every throat echoed in joyous acclaim, "Bonaparte." Amidst the dismal scenes at Dalton, the long-abused, ragged soldiers of the Army of Tennessee heard read at the head of every regiment the following order:

¹¹Campaigns of Wheeler and His Cavalry, 158.

"HEADQUARTERS, ARMY OF TENNESSEE,
"Dalton, Dec. 28, 1863.

"*General Orders*

"No. — :

"By order of his Excellency the President, I have the honor to assume command of this army.

"J. E. JOHNSTON,
"General."

At every bivouac on the field, at every fireside in the rear, the joyous dawn of day seemed to have risen from the night. What Johnston thought had not been spoken; what Johnston would do no proclamation declared. The "slumbering capability" of the army and the people in every breast was conscious. Thousands who had continued the flight from Missionary Ridge to their homes returned with new shoes, new home-quilted hats, new home-made suits of jeans from the spinning-wheel and the hand-loom.

The general commanding ordered a review. Men fell into ranks from the tentless camps, 6000 without arms, thrown away in the recent rout, many yet with bare feet, few with blankets. The horses that guided the guns and caissons down the hill were too poor to draw them back. Forty field-pieces, most of them captures at Murfreesboro, had been abandoned at Missionary Ridge. Weak as were the horses of the batteries, the guns themselves were not better. Much of "the artillery was of such light calibre and short range that it only exposed the gunners."¹²

The effective strength of the Army of Tennessee when Johnston took command, December 28th, 1863, was 36,017.¹³ There was only one lieutenant-general—Hardee.

The general commanding was at once encountered by the redoubtable governor of Georgia, Joseph E. Brown. The single track railroad to Atlanta was the property of the state of Georgia and the governor was ex-officio manager. The rolling stock was short and the track slow. The governor esteemed his authority highly; the mer-

¹²Hughes' Johnston, 218.

¹³Johnston's Narrative; Hughes' Johnston.

chants at Atlanta, and at the many towns on the line, had to collect and distribute food to the people by this line of railroad. Brown was ex-officio guardian of the rights of the people of Georgia in their own property, the railroad. The general invited the governor to his quarters. The army was permitted to supply itself by the road and at once the long-absent bounties of ample cornmeal and bacon came into camp. From that day forward General Johnston had in Governor Brown a devoted friend.

General Johnston immediately upon his accession to command received many letters from the government urging him to move forward the recently routed army of Bragg and recover the territory in middle Tennessee from which Bragg had been driven six months before. The president not only wrote by mail, but he sent officers of his personal staff, Colonel William Preston Johnston among them, to urge his desire for the forward movement. He finally sent Brigadier-General Pendleton, chief of artillery of the Army of Northern Virginia, on the same mission.

Johnston fortified Dalton in the highest art of military engineering. The works were built for several miles on his front. On his left was Rockyface Mountain, with precipitous sides, unassailable except at a few gaps. Fifteen miles on his rear was the railroad town of Resaca on the Oostanaula river. He fortified Resaca and built anew, or repaired, wagon roads connecting that place with Dalton for prompt and easy egress.

Here we shall leave the Army of Tennessee for awhile. General Grant commanded all the Southwest. He laid plans to open his campaign against Atlanta with his accustomed originality of conception and his ordinary challenge of chance in war. He proposed to move two widely separated armies, one under himself, from Chattanooga, double the strength of Johnston, and the other under Sherman, from Vicksburg, more than fifty per cent. stronger than Johnston.

On the third day of February, 1864, Sherman would move

out of Vicksburg with a picked force, 20,000 infantry and artillery, would march unopposed across Mississippi to Meridian, near the eastern border of the state, and there drive Lieutenant-General Polk, with 15,000 men, out of reach, destroying the large Confederate depots there and the railroad, running stock and track. At Meridian, Sherman would be joined by a splendid cavalry corps, some 7000 picked men, with artillery and infantry support. Taking command of the whole, Sherman would march through the "Egypt" of the Confederacy, the black belt of Alabama, laying waste the plantations and running off the slaves. He would then proceed to Selma, destroy the government arsenal there, thence to Montgomery. Finding the small army under Dabney Maury on his rear, at Mobile, merely for the works of the thing he would send a detachment to capture it. Returning to Montgomery, this detachment would reunite with the moving column on Atlanta. Thus, with Grant at Chattanooga and Sherman at Atlanta, Johnston between them, behind his works at Dalton, would be starved into inglorious destruction.

The president ordered Hardee, with his corps, to help Polk. Johnston protested. The draft on him would leave him with 20,000 men only, confronting Grant. Polk would have settled his account with Sherman before Hardee could reach him. The president sent a direct order to Hardee to go. Then followed a hasty requisition for many plantation wagons and mules to meet Hardee at Demopolis. When Hardee reached that town, Polk was already there. The wagons and teams were re-distributed whence they had come and the troops, scattered all along the railroad from Atlanta to Selma, were sent back.

Sherman wrote to his wife that he had reached Meridian. He burned a large quantity of Confederate supplies there, many cars and some engines, and tore up miles of the track. He went no farther, but turned his face back to Vicksburg without opposition. He was profoundly mortified. "I am down on William Sooy Smith," he wrote. "He could have come to me, and I know it, and had he I would have

captured Polk's army; but the enemy had too much cavalry for me to attempt it with men on foot. As it was, I scared the bishop out of his senses."

The cavalry alone could be expected to destroy the plantations and the cavalry did not meet its engagement to join the marauding expedition at Meridian. Grant and Sherman had deliberated in the selection of a leader of this cavalry. They agreed upon Smith. Sherman warned Smith that Forrest would fall across his path. Forrest must be disposed of: "Kill him," said the general.

This was February and Forrest had only the troops he had selected and organized since October. They were the troops the president had sent him away from Bragg to muster. He wrote to General Stephen Lee: "I have only about 3000 armed men and they are much scattered in gathering up the balance of the commands. I

have 1200 men now out in Mississippi after arms. You are aware that with my force of raw, undrilled and undisciplined troops it will not do for me to risk a general engagement," etc.

The general engagement came, nevertheless. Smith had proceeded on his way to join Sherman at Meridian as far as West Point, in northeastern Mississippi. Forrest struck him February 22d. After several days' fighting, he put the foe to rout, driving him in disorganized flight back to Memphis. Thus Sherman, in disappointment, marched leisurely back to Vicksburg.

General Grant, hearing of Hardee's departure to help Polk, even while Forrest was fighting William Sooy Smith moved out in three columns upon Johnston, under Thomas.

This was, in good faith, a start for Atlanta. Thomas, in command, had orders to "gain possession of Dalton and as far south as possible."¹⁴ No instructions could be more definite. The Confederate commander, with Hardee on the road far out of reach, had not more than 20,000 troops and no second in command. Wheeler, of course, was on the front with that part of his force that was left with Kelly when the other part, now under Martin in east Tennessee,

¹⁴Off. War Records.

went away with Longstreet thither. An officer present, of Wheeler's corps, wrote:

"We were hastily called out to meet the enemy. Upon reaching our drill ground, in sight of Tunnel Hill, I was astonished to see them beyond the town, drawn up in line of battle. They had driven in General Humes' pickets and advanced rapidly on the Ringgold road. I was certain that the great battle was to be fought immediately. General Wheeler retired slowly and stationed his force on the south side of Tunnel Hill. Our infantry were thrown in line of battle and preparations made to give the foe a warm reception. But the Yankees did not advance farther. They contented themselves with shelling the town and throwing a few rounds into our lines. In about two hours they retired and everything was again quiet. Kilpatrick seems to have been in command, as he left a boastful and insulting note to General Wheeler before retiring. We are all on the alert, expecting battle at any hour. General Wheeler thinks the enemy will advance in a few days." So much for February 23d.

But the cavalry work was not yet over with. On the 24th the three columns advanced and Wheeler received the attack of that one which occupied the centre. He checked it by his artillery fire, but to no avail. Finding the other two, one on his right flank and the other on his left, about to envelop him, he retired. The enemy went into camp for the night upon the Chattanooga side of Mill Creek Gap.

Johnston had a large part of his infantry in the pass, watching for the foe. All day the firing continued at intervals there while the enemy, by marching another heavy detachment around the mountain, late in the day, gained entrance to Crow Valley, immediately above Dalton. Wheeler discovered this latter serious movement and reported it. Confederate infantry and artillery were dispatched under Hindman to meet them. Some fighting and constant skirmishing took place until night. Meantime, the enemy attacked Stewart on Hindman's right, in Mill Creek Gap. While Stewart sent down upon them from the

hill a severe musketry fire, he opened a battery upon their front. They retired in confusion.

General Johnston had been in the saddle all day. As he rode up after dark to his headquarters he met information that the guard left at Dug Gap had behaved badly—retired without firing a shot—and the enemy's regiment of mounted infantry had taken possession. At that moment the advance of Hardee's returning column, Granberry's Texas brigade, filed off the cars at the Dalton railroad station. They were hurried on to bivouac at the foot of the mountain, with orders to recover possession of Dug Gap at dawn next day. Granberry, at a very early hour sent a part of his force to the summit and drew up the remainder in the mouth of the gap. To the astonishment of the foe within, they discovered the trap and in utmost haste fled.

So the three days, February 23d, 24th, 25th, in which General Thomas undertook to obey General Grant's orders to "gain possession of Dalton and as far south as possible," terminated without success. General Grant's double movement upon Atlanta had failed.

President Lincoln was still oppressed by the complaints of his people. Constant demand was made upon him in high places, to change the generals commanding his armies. "I will change any one now in command for a better commander, but I must know the man before I act," was his homely reply. He had come into absolute power with very limited knowledge of public men and with no knowledge of military men or military affairs. In this respect Mr. Davis had great advantage, for when he became the president of the Confederacy he knew all the public men and all the older officers of the army under him.

The president of the United States saw that with the quadrennial return of a presidential election his succession to office must be claimed upon results looking to a close of the war. He must prepare the military campaign for the summer of 1864 to meet the exactions of the cotemporary

political campaign. With wisdom and sagacity, he made the combination as no other man in America would have done, perhaps could have done.

The first step was to reorganize the army and thus to inspire hope of military successes throughout the constituency that held the ballot. Reorganization of the army must be non-political and the general aim must be, one army with one head, a soldier, who was not a politician, to be the one head.

Adroitly enough, Mr. Lincoln's initial act was to advise Congress to restore the grade of lieutenant-general, lost by the voluntary retirement of the superannuated Scott. The grade was at once revived by law, Grant nominated for it and immediately and unanimously confirmed, to be placed without a moment's delay in command of all the armies. Thus was the army to be consolidated and propelled. A masterly stroke.

The lieutenant-general had never cast a vote. The prospect was for increased use of the army at the polls, and his non-partisan antecedents, thus far, seemed to recommend him for his high place, with its complication of military and semi-civil duties. His old army associates had been distinctly southern—he had married a daughter of a Missouri slave master, owned slaves, and in all respects carried the impress of a southern man.

The new commander of all the armies fixed his headquarters with the Army of the Potomac, facing Lee, and took command in person. He called General Sherman to take his place in front of Johnston, at Dalton.

General Sherman, as we have seen, was of the ancient New England stock, born in Ohio, a graduate from West Point and a man of culture. His habit of mind, naturally rude, had been moderated doubtless by the culture and devout religious (Catholic) tone of his wife. For his family he had a sincere affection.

Sherman entered upon preparation for his campaign with great relish. Grant had modestly declared to him that whatever success in the field stood to his credit really should be traced to Sherman and McPherson, as his in-

dispensable supports. Now that the president had found a head for the army, Sherman well knew that he had only to appeal to Grant for every means his situation seemed to him to require for the execution of his purposes. He had not the remotest apprehension of failure. His first step was to avoid the hazard which overtook Rosecrans, the feeding of his army. He spent the month of April in Nashville, giving ceaseless attention to this pivotal feature. He called his commissary and the general manager of the Louisville and Nashville railroad, then a single track, short line, into conference. He wanted supplies for 100,000 men and 35,000 horses, to follow the army. The commissary estimated the bulk, horses on one-third full rations of grain and no hay, grass and fodder stacks of the country on the line of march to meet the deficiency. The railroad manager found the cars required would be 180 per diem and his road had them not, nor the engines. The quartermaster agreed to lay a bridge of boats connecting Jeffersonville, Indiana, with Louisville, so that engines and cars from all points above the Ohio river and east of the Mississippi should pass over, on to Nashville. The engines and trains thus brought over were to be sent on, with their loads, to Chattanooga or to the army. The railroad commercial traffic was broken up in Tennessee and Georgia. "I found thousands of citizens actually feeding on our stores," Sherman wrote to his wife, "on the plea of starvation, and other citizens by paying freights were allowed to carry goods, wares and merchandise to all towns from Nashville to Chattanooga." All cars, freight and passengers were at once dedicated to the army. The inhabitants must go to Kentucky and drive cattle for slaughter; "the idlers, Christian commissions and all sorts of curiosity hunters" must load passenger cars no longer. President Lincoln heard the news, through numerous protests from Union folk, and wrote to ask if the rigid orders might not be relaxed so as to feed the people. The general replied: "People may starve, but an army cannot do its work." No wall tents should be carried. He would carry only a fly and a candle-box for desk. Each regiment would have only one wagon

and each company one pack-mule, for use of officers. Men in the ranks would carry one suit of underwear and three days' rations.

A fortunate letter comes now into our story—from a young captain of Wheeler's corps to his bride of sixty days:

"TUNNEL HILL, GA., March 27, 1864.

"The temptation offered by a bright, balmy Sabbath afternoon to indulge in writing, strengthened by a short respite from other duties, would perhaps be difficult to overcome even were my privileges less open. But when I assure you that indulgence is my second greatest pleasure in camp-life, no doubt you will freely forgive the use of the sacred day, especially when you come to learn that all the forenoon I have been a good boy, reading my Bible and entertaining as few unpropitious thoughts as may be, with one surrounded by the 'terribly wicked.' A—— said, I 'looked so handsome in my new uniform,' did she! I put it on again this morning and felt an inch taller in the news.

Speaking of snowballing, I recently witnessed the sport on a grand scale—companies, regiments, brigades, divisions and corps engaged. I did not indulge, preferring to stand a 'looker-on in Venice.'

"Last Thursday the officers of our regiment went before the examining board, composed of Generals Kelly and Humes. Some were subjected to a very slight examination, while others passed through a severe ordeal. Captain —— and myself were examined orally and had only some two dozen questions put to us each. Others stood written examinations of several hours' length. No one that I know of has heard the result and probably ever will. I made the acquaintance of General Kelly, a nice, boyish-looking little fellow, with fine eyes and a mouth indicative of decided character."¹⁵

¹⁵General Kelly was a native of Alabama; entered West Point as from California and resigned in 1861, a few months before graduation, to enter the Confederate army. His youth was emphasized by the slightness of his figure, light-colored hair and moustache. His voice was clear and strong; his bearing exceedingly martial; his example in action most inspiring. He was another Pelham.

"This [Sunday] morning, the great day for inspection and review, we had a grand review of our brigade. Generals Wheeler, Kelly, Humes and Allen, with their gay, dashing staff, rode before us. Unfortunately, about half the different regiments were off on duty, rendering the display less imposing. This accounts for the appearance of my new uniform the second time.

"We were all aroused about three o'clock this morning by an alarm on the picket line. Judging by the time of the alarm, I concluded we were about to have a bloody day, but it turned out a fake and we returned to camp fully satisfied. Everything is unusually quiet in this department; I fear the lull that precedes the storm.

"I doubt whether a volunteer army could be more perfect in its organization than the Army of Tennessee. General Johnston seems to have infused a new spirit into the whole mass, and out of chaos brought order and beauty. Our men are better clothed than at any previous time, while their food is better than one would have anticipated two months ago.

"We have had unusually severe weather during the past week, two heavy snow-storms succeeded by cold rains. In my last, I believe it was, I was lamenting the death (on a scout) of Sergeant Duncan, of my company. Only two men from my company were sent through the lines."

Another letter a month later:

"TUNNEL HILL, GA., April 10, 1864.

"Everything is as quiet and serene as a May morning. General Wheeler is either becoming vain or likes his cavalry so well that he keeps it all the time under his eye. Our discipline is the most rigid that I have ever known volunteers to be subjected to. Some of it has good effect, some bad. The routine of camp and field duty is so great that we can scarcely find time to eat half rations. You may form some idea when I tell you that on this day, Sunday, although general orders require that all military duty, not indispensable, shall be dispensed with,

I have been called away to attend to something three times since commencing this letter. I do not complain. I try to put a good face on every thing, and share with privates and subalterns the most arduous and disagreeable duties."

From time to time indications abounded of the approaching activity of General Sherman. A letter from the front under date "Tunnel Hill, Ga., April 23, 1864," describes some of the scenes at the Confederate cavalry outposts:

"This morning part of our brigade attacked the enemy's picket lines, captured between 30 and 40, killed and wounded some 13 to 15, and lost one man killed and two wounded—a good little work to do before breakfast. We have thus taken double pay for the raids they have been making on our pickets. With a few more dashes, I think we will have the Yankee cavalry appreciating our prowess.

"We have been drilling almost incessantly under Generals Wheeler, Kelly and Allen. General Wheeler had some dummies made of old clothes, stuffed with straw, standing like infantry in line, a hundred yards long. Sixty yards behind the dummy line there is a line of men on foot, with guns loaded with blank cartridges. We charge the dummies at full speed, the blank cartridges behind fire and the men run. Very pretty sport to the generals but dangerous and fatiguing to the men doing the work. Day before yesterday several were unhorsed and severely bruised, one poor fellow catching a buckshot in the shoulder from a blank (?) cartridge.

"General Wheeler comes around about sunrise almost every morning to see the command grooming their horses. To do this, each man leads his horse out in line and carries him for one hour, all the officers present to see it properly done."

The day's work in camp over, General Wheeler was wont to call together officers of the same grade, to talk with them and study their individual characters, that each man might be known in emergencies of the field.

Among the tricks of the combatants upon each other,

came a visit of Dr. Mary E. Walker, claiming to be assistant surgeon on General McCook's staff, to Wheeler's picket line. She rode with sang-froid in her bloomer costume, with marks of military rank, to the picket, holding above her head a flag of truce, in form of a letter. The letter, she averred, was from a Confederate prisoner and was to be mailed. She turned to ride back, but the prudent picket took her to headquarters, whence she was sent on to Richmond.

Brigadier-General Pendleton, chief of artillery, Army of Northern Virginia, a clergyman of the Protestant Episcopal Church in private life, was selected by President Davis to visit General Johnston at his headquarters at Dalton and lay before him the president's plan of immediate advance of the Army of Tennessee into middle Tennessee, and farther. Pendleton arrived April 14th at night. General Johnston invited him to army headquarters the next day, the 15th, and invited General Wheeler to participate in the conference because of Wheeler's accurate knowledge of the topography of the vast area north and west of Dalton, through which the army must advance, if at all, under the president's plan. Wheeler, too, through his always reliable system of scouting, had the necessary information of the disposition of Sherman's corps, and at least an approximately correct knowledge of the strength of each. The conference between Pendleton and the general commanding continued all day, Wheeler being present most of the time, to make plain the information wanted of him and to understand, and reach an opinion upon, the views of the president and those of General Johnston.

On the 15th General Pendleton, still at Dalton, reduced to writing his report to the president. General Johnston immediately communicated to Colonel Benjamin S. Ewell, of his staff, the substance of his own views, as expressed to General Pendleton, stating the facts and conditions on which they were founded, and dispatched this intelligent and appreciative staff officer to lay them directly before the president and General Bragg at Richmond.

Wheeler reported Sherman's three armies, estimating

them from papers captured, from prisoners captured, from faithful and intelligent scouts, from citizens' reports and other sources at, infantry 83,000; artillery 5000; cavalry 15,000, an aggregate of 103,000, with 15,000 negro troops ready for use in Tennessee and 5000 Tennessee Unionist whites organized and armed, to respond to the call.

Wheeler's estimate, 103,000, of which aggregate 15,000 were cavalry, was verified, with singular accuracy, by Sherman himself. Later in the same month, referring to his completed preparations and rapidly approaching enterprise, the invading commander wrote to his wife: "I will begin with Schofield, 12,000 infantry and 5000 cavalry; Thomas, 40,000 infantry and 5000 cavalry, and McPherson, 20,000 infantry and 5000 cavalry,"—87,000 in the aggregate. He wrote to Grant officially, upon the eve of starting out, as we have just seen, that he had even a larger force than this, assigning to each subordinate his place and the force under him.

To assist the president's messenger with the amplest information, General Johnston, in conference, furnished a complete return of his army; 39,396 of all arms—infantry, 34,500; artillery, 2811; effective cavalry, 2085

Before coming to the consideration of the president's plan of aggressive movement of the Army of Tennessee, submitted by General Pendleton, special messenger, it will be remembered that Pendleton came the middle of April, after the direct urgency call for reinforcements, running through several previous months, had been without effect. While Longstreet was yet in Tennessee he was invited by the government to consider such a combination and movement forward as this: "The army under Johnston would move out from Dalton; the army under Longstreet, in east Tennessee, some two hundred miles away, would move in the same direction, and the two, having united at Kingston, would cross the Tennessee river and occupy middle Tennessee."¹⁶ Longstreet did not concur. The enemy, with a greater force than either Confederate army to be mobilized,

¹⁶Rise and Fall of the Confederate Government; Off. War Records, with correspondence.

greater, indeed, than both combined, lay between the two. Their union at Kingston was impracticable, even if both were equipped and provided for such an expedition. In lieu of crossing to the north of the Tennessee to fight, Longstreet proposed that Johnston should be reinforced at Dalton with all of Polk's army, with all of his and with a considerable part of Beauregard's. A battle would then be forced on Grant. His counsel was given in reply, March 16th, just a month prior to the Pendleton conference.

Longstreet not considered, the president sent by General Pendleton his plan that Johnston should move forward, (1) because the enemy on his front was not as strong as Johnston mistakenly supposed; (2) because the Army of Tennessee should come to the relief of the Army of Northern Virginia by preventing Sherman from reinforcing Grant; (3) because the Confederacy needed the lost territory, taken from Bragg; (4) because the Army of Tennessee, dispirited by recent misfortunes, needed action to restore its morale and the country needed evidence of the efficiency of the second of the great armies; (5) because it was not right to permit the enemy to form his own plans.¹⁷

General Wheeler concurred with General Johnston that with the present force, and in the absence of necessary preparations, the Army of Tennessee could not succeed in an attempt to execute the president's plan. General Pendleton, having been sent by the commander-in-chief to present his plan, and to contend for it, reported that the enemy on Johnston's front was greater than the president's estimate, and that, having Johnston's facts before him and the reasoning deducible, he "did not feel justified in pertinaciously advocating" the president's plan for an advance.¹⁸

The president referred the reports he received to General Bragg. Johnston, through Colonel Ewell, had reported to Bragg that the 1000 artillery horses called for by him on taking command, and the 1000 wagons, had not yet been supplied; that the plan of the president con-

¹⁷Off. War Rec., XXXVIII, Part III, pp. 622-3.

¹⁸Ibid.

templated an advance of one hundred and thirty miles through a destitute and barren country, its sparsely settled inhabitants generally hostile; that a train carrying provisions, pontoons, ammunition, etc., for a sufficient army would require for its reasonable safety all his cavalry, thus leaving the column in motion without cavalry; that when the army reached middle Tennessee it would depend on an already despoiled country and be cut off from other sources.

General Bragg endorsed the memorandum of Colonel Ewell with vehement protest. Johnston had neglected the original plan of the president, to move forward. "Elaborate preparations" were nonsense. Meantime, Grant had made new combinations, General Bragg said, and the delay seemed to be fatal. Grant did not have in February, nor did Sherman have in April, the strength imputed by Johnston. "Not more than 60,000 can be brought before us in front of Chattanooga," he wrote on April 22d. Give Johnston 7000 more men, taking them in Loring's division from Polk, and "require him to strike first at Ringgold and then at Cleveland." Buckner would threaten Burnside, at Knoxville, and Forrest might be sent from Mississippi to middle Tennessee.

The controversy was closed by the knowledge obtained, through Wheeler, of Sherman's preparations to advance.

General Grant notified General Sherman that a movement of all the Union armies against the Confederate armies would be ordered for May 4th, 1864. He would move upon the Army of Northern Virginia; Sherman would move upon Johnston; Butler move upon Richmond; Sigel would capture the railroad to Bristol; Banks would move upon Kirby Smith, at Shreveport, supported by Porter's fleet of gunboats, on Red river. Banks was disposed of at once. Major-General Richard Taylor met and fought him twenty miles from Shreveport. Banks retreated; Taylor planned to capture Porter's gunboats, aground. Lieutenant-General Kirby Smith came from Shreveport, countermanded his orders and withdrew the

army. Taylor expected his almost perfected movement to repossess New Orleans and the whole length of the Mississippi south of Cairo. That done, to arrest Sherman's pursuit of Johnston would be the logical sequence.¹⁹

Sherman, having perfected the desperate enterprise of feeding his army, as we have seen, proceeded to place it on the field for action. He wrote to Grant that he would place the Army of the Cumberland, General Thomas, with 40,000 men, in the centre; he would bring Schofield, with the Army of the Ohio, 25,000, to his left flank from east Tennessee; he would give McPherson his right, with 23,000, "the best men in the world," he said, western farmers, the Army of the Tennessee. These infantry regiments and the men manning some two hundred pieces of field artillery, of the latest patterns with 15,000 splendidly mounted and equipped cavalry, in all about 100,000, made up the magnificent army that never bore a name except that its headquarters were known as the "Military Department of the Mississippi."

Sherman appeared in person at Chattanooga on April 29th and assumed command.

Sherman wrote to Grant that at the signal from him to open operations he would play upon Johnston's front with Thomas' 40,000, while McPherson, with 23,000 infantry and artillery, and 10,000 special cavalry, would cross the Tennessee at Decatur, Alabama, then, turning eastward, would bring up at Rome, Georgia, in the rear of Johnston. Making himself safe at Rome, and thus bottling up Johnston at Dalton, McPherson with his 10,000 cavalry would ride leisurely through Alabama, as far south as the Wetumpka, thence to Opelika, destroying the country and tearing up the railroads that fed Johnston.

This first conception of strategy was abandoned without explanation.

General Sherman was ready—as nearly ready as a master of the art of war would be under his conditions. He had promised Grant to move forward on May 4th. The

¹⁹Taylor's Destruction and Reconstruction.

promise was kept, in as much as he got his three armies together, equipped and waiting for the word, on that day.

General Grant crossed the Rappahannock, at unguarded fords, beginning at midnight, May 3d, between Fredericksburg and the Army of Northern Virginia. He had not divined Lee's strategy. He expected the Confederate general, with then only Ewell's and Hill's corps, about 40,000 men, to retire towards Richmond, throw up breastworks and await an assault from three times his numbers. Grant said his train was sixty-five miles long. His battle front, two ranks deep, would be thirty-two miles.²⁰

Lee, with the fragment left to him, stood on the right flank of Grant and allowed him to get into position on May 4th. May 5th Grant attacked and fought all day. Longstreet came up May 6th at sunrise and the battle raged furiously from that time till night. Lee was almost the complete victor,—and this was the battle of the Wilderness, Grant's opening of his grand campaign! We shall consider it further.

The same as if he had heard Grant's guns in the Wilderness, Sherman, on the same May 5th formed in line of battle three miles in front of Tunnel Hill and immediately began demonstrations.

It was an all-day fight with Wheeler, two days later. His men dismounted and, resting behind rude breastworks, he held Thomas back from Tunnel Hill until eleven o'clock, May 7th, then, retiring to Mill Creek Gap, where the railroad from Atlanta to Chattanooga passes through the mountain ranges, he fought and held him back until three o'clock. The adjutant-general of the army hastened to write: "Let me congratulate you on your splendid success until the general can speak his thanks." A northern newspaper correspondent wrote home: "The rebel cavalry fought our advance with an abandon and a desperation worthy of a better cause."

In possession of Tunnel Hill, General Sherman rode upon an elevation that commanded a clear view of Dalton and the preparations to defend the position. He saw the

²⁰General Lee, 327.

gaping Buzzard Roost Gap and every hill-top crowned with works. He had seen enough. He would not assault. He would not butcher his fine men. He resolved to "save them the terrible door of death that Johnston had prepared for them in the Buzzard Roost."²¹

Sherman's final plan was to hold Johnston with Thomas and Schofield while he sent McPherson, with 30,000 men, thirty miles southward to pass through Snake Creek Gap, four or five miles north of Resaca.

While McPherson moved away on this secret march, Hooker sent one of his divisions to strike again Dug Gap. Only two small regiments of Arkansas troops defended it. The contact of these unequal forces created so much noise that General Hardee hastened thither in person, calling to Granberry, with his brigade of Texans, to follow. Grigsby's Kentucky cavalry made haste to reach the place, but finding the mountain side too steep, hitched their horses and scaled the heights on foot. Granberry's Texans, coming on and finding the idle horses, mounted them and succeeded in reaching the summit, from where they galloped to the point of combat. General Johnston came up in person. While some men and officers dodged shell from below, he stood erect. The enemy were driven off. The same day, at another point, Pettus' Alabama brigade repulsed Newton's division, after sharp fighting. The next day, May 9th, Pettus and Brown were engaged at the same place as was Pettus on the 8th. On the 9th, too, Stewart and Bate were unsuccessfully assaulted.

General Grant, fully equipped and assured of the countenance of his government in any conduct he might adopt, announced to his subordinate commanders his simple policy: "Where Lee goes, we go also."

General Sherman gave out word to his subordinate commanders: "Joe Johnston is my objective; where he goes, I follow."

Johnston employed every art to prevail with Sherman to strike him at Dalton, as Grant had struck Lee, but with-

²¹Sherman's Home Letters, 292.

out effect. Sherman wrote home of the southern people: "No amount of poverty or adversity seems to shake their faith; niggers gone, wealth and luxury gone, money worthless, starvation in view within a period of two or three years, and causes enough to make the bravest tremble, yet I see no signs of let-up—some few deserters, plenty tired of war, but the masses determined to fight it out." Writing his recent observations, he said: "I doubt if history affords a parallel to the deep and bitter enmity of the women of the south. No one who sees and hears them but must feel the intensity of their hate. Not a man is seen; nothing but women, with houses plundered, fields open to cattle and horses, pickets lounging on every porch and desolation sown broadcast, servants all gone and women and children bred in luxury, beautiful and accomplished, begging with one breath for the soldier's rations and in another praying that the Almighty or Joe Johnston will come and kill us, the despoilers of their homes and all that is sacred."²²

There was nothing as far out as Tunnel Hill, ten miles from army headquarters at Dalton, to resist the enemy. Marching through Snake Creek Gap, he would debouch upon the plain, five miles from Resaca.

Why was not Snake Creek Gap fortified? No answer is known. Cleburne says Makall, chief of staff, told him it was left open in "flagrant disobedience of orders." Perhaps so. We shall see presently. In the late afternoon of this May 9th General Sherman sat at dinner, his staff about him. A dispatch came from McPherson; the head of his column had entered the plain, five miles from Resaca, and all was well. The general, in elation, threw his clenched fist upon the board, rattling the dishes: "I've got Joe Johnston dead! Now we will ride and tell Tom."²³ Between 30,000 of "the best men in the world," under the most enterprising lieutenant, in the rear, and Thomas and Schofield, with more than double that force on his front, Johnston's career was of course closed, as General Sherman believed, and with apparent good reason. He knew

²²Sherman's Home Letters, p. 268.

²³Narrative of General Willard Warren; Annals of the War.

the roads were few, narrow and difficult in the rear of Dalton for an escaping army. He was sure of his prey.

Snake Creek Gap was not fortified but Resaca was; the army at Dalton was not dependent upon the difficult roads in the rear counted on by General Sherman, because two or more good roads had been built connecting the fortified position of Resaca with the fortified position of Dalton. Snake Creek Gap, fortified, would have been impracticable to Sherman, but Sherman could have moved to Resaca, the necessary objective of any flanking movement, through the open country on Johnston's right. Sherman had more than double Johnston's army. In any event, he could hold Johnston at Dalton and move at the same time, by the left or by the right, to his rear. Did not Johnston leave open Snake Creek Gap, upon his left, for the logistics of it?

Why did not Johnston fight at Dalton, as Lee fought in the Wilderness? He had every advantage of position; his army was perfectly confident. Grant attacked Lee; it was a feature of his grand universal forward movement. Sherman obeyed orders and actually moved forward, but not by the method his superior had adopted. Sherman refused battle, offered at Dalton; there was no enemy for Johnston to engage, in front of the superb preparations made to receive one.

General Sherman's elation over McPherson's unresisted entrance upon the plain of Resaca was short-lived. He wrote confidentially to Grant: "My first movement against Johnston was really fine, and I now believe I would have disposed of him at one blow if McPherson had crushed Resaca, as he might have done, for then it was garrisoned only by a small brigade; but Mc was a little overcautious, lest Johnston, still at Dalton, might move against him alone; but the truth was, I got all of McPherson's army, 23,000, eighteen miles to Johnston's rear before he knew they had left Huntsville."

McPherson failed to "crush Resaca" because Johnston had fortified the position. Johnston had troops there in time; he had built roads from Dalton to get more troops there in time, if needed. He actually sent Cleburne and

Walker to reinforce Cantey; he had cavalry in Snake Creek Gap to give him immediate information.

McPherson attacked Cantey, but his 23,000 against Cantey's 3000 failed to carry entrenchments held by good marksmen. McPherson did not withdraw until his attack had failed. He knew that on his rear, in easy reach, was Hooker, to support him with 10,000 fresh men. He believed that Johnston would send in, behind Hooker, as soon as the latter cleared the mountain passes and debouched upon the Resaca plain, enough troops to drive or capture both. Sherman, and later General Hood, had an exaggerated idea of Johnston's strength. In a word, General Sherman had placed McPherson between Cantey, impreguably fortified, and Johnston's army, in easy reach, at Dalton. Sherman's later experiences in the long and tireless campaign to Atlanta left no ground upon which to complain of McPherson at Resaca. Sherman's plan had failed there, as each and all that followed failed, because he was outgeneralled at Resaca and elsewhere to the end.

General Sherman is mistaken in the allegation that McPherson left Huntsville and took position before Resaca with an army, "before Johnston knew he had left Huntsville." We have seen that in the conference between President Davis' messenger, General Pendleton, Johnston and Wheeler, on April 16th, at Dalton, Wheeler's enumeration of Sherman's various commands included McPherson, and gave correctly his strength. Wheeler had examined all the roads on right, left and rear of Dalton, and Johnston knew their width, length, availability of moving troops and connections. He knew when a given number of troops set out on a particular road how long it would require them to make the march to a given point. That study of logistics by the Confederate commander, made possible by the enterprise and correctness of Wheeler, accounts for McPherson's failure.

While McPherson moved upon Resaca by a circuitous route, covered by the mountain, on Johnston's left, Sherman sent an expedition of cavalry and infantry upon the Confederate right to distract attention. The result was a conflict with

Wheeler. The two sides approaching each other, skirmishing became heavy and, as usual with General Wheeler, he rode to the skirmish line. Presently he was seen approaching the column in line, his horse at full speed, his staff following. Drawing rein, he explained to the officer commanding. The line moved forward, the fighting began. Wheeler broke through two lines of the foe by the impetuosity of his onset. The third line stood valiantly. As the 8th Confederate, Colonel Wade, broke through the second line, a sergeant of one of the companies received a wound and simultaneously his horse was also wounded. The maddened animal, made uncontrollable by pain, at once dashed headlong with his bleeding rider into the third line. There a tragic scene was witnessed. The horse fell from exhaustion and an enemy attacked the sergeant, thus dismounted and too feeble in his pain to resist. Captain John S. McElderry, a tall, handsome young officer, rushed up, mounted, to rescue the sergeant and was himself shot dead. The dead captain's body was recovered and buried in the beautiful cemetery at his home, Talladega. The enemy was routed. Among the captives was Colonel La Grange, commanding a cavalry brigade, a young officer of high ambition. He was taken to General Wheeler. To the general he gave vent to his sense of failure and disappointment. "If my men had fought as well as yours," he exclaimed, "I would have got the brigadier's commission promised to me this morning by General Sherman if I succeeded." Wheeler assured his gallant captive the misfortune could not be laid at his door. This was the battle of Varnell station, May 9th.

Lieutenant-General Polk arrived from Demopolis, at Resaca, with Loring's division, French's yet on the way, on the night of the 11th. Lieutenant-General Hood met him on his way to Dalton to report to General Johnston. Hood had been appointed lieutenant-general and assigned to the Army of Tennessee in February. As the two rode in the night, Hood expressed a desire to the bishop-general to be united by baptism with the Church. After leaving Johnston, it was past midnight when Hood's quarters, lighted

by a tallow candle, were reached. A tin bucket was brought. The bishop-general consecrated the water; the soldier with one leg stood, resting heavily on his crutches because of the difficulty of kneeling, and the ritual of the Protestant Episcopal Church was pronounced for the rite.

General Sherman heard of the arrival of Polk. General Johnston next day, May 12th, ordered General Wheeler to take 2200 men and force his way to the north end of Rockyface Mountain, to discover whether Sherman was moving to reinforce McPherson. Wheeler encountered Stoneman, with 5000 cavalry, supported by infantry. The fighting was very severe. The defeat of Stoneman was complete. He fled the field and in his flight burned a train, supposed to consist of 400 loaded wagons.²⁴

The cavalry expedition revealed the fact that General Sherman was not only reinforcing McPherson, but was moving the bulk of his army upon Resaca. Thomas yet held position in front of Dalton, but planning only to deceive Johnston.

General Wheeler sent this news to army headquarters. In prompt reply he received the following order:

“DALTON, May 12, 1864.

“General Wheeler’s Staff:

“General Johnston wishes to see General Wheeler before night.

“Communicate this to him if possible.

“Respectfully,

“W W Makall,
“Chief of Staff.”

Later, the same afternoon, another order followed:

“DALTON, May 12, 1864.

“General Wheeler:

“General Johnston wishes you to return your troops to camp and report here promptly in person.

“Respectfully,

“W W Makall,
“Chief of Staff.”

²⁴Report of Citizens.

Wheeler employed his cavalry so effectively that Schofield, coming from the direction of Knoxville, made no impression on the right of the army. Thomas found the front attack impracticable and withdrew. Wheeler kept the commanding general so well informed of McPherson's flank movement, south of Rockyface Mountain, that no surprise was felt when the fiasco of attack upon Cantey on Resaca was made. On the 12th of May, Wheeler beat back Stoneman's attempt to hang a curtain between the movement of the whole army of invasion, around south of Rockyface, to take Johnston in the rear. It was from this last expedition he was recalled by the dispatches just quoted. Finally, on the night of the 13th, shortly after midnight, the evacuation of Dalton began. Hardee moved first; Hood followed.

Wheeler had orders to continue to occupy the works from which the main army had moved. Thomas, left to bring up Sherman's rear in the grand flank movement, sought to keep the secret from the Confederate commander by a vigorous attack on the works at Dalton, still hoping McPherson, now reinforced by Schofield, would capture Resaca in his rear. Wheeler so disposed his men, dismounted, as to deceive Thomas to continue his attack. Then, gradually withdrawing, he rode behind Hood on the Tilton road, and protected his rear by fifteen hours' sharp fighting—a remarkable performance. The Confederates left no baggage, no artillery or other property at Dalton. Johnston did not retreat in advance of Sherman there or at any other point save one, which we shall name in the campaign. Sherman moved ahead and compelled him to change positions by virtue of superior numbers.

Polk was already in position, as just written. The wonderful art of war was now as never before displayed. Sherman had, he says, 98,727 men on the field.²⁵ Johnston had about 50,000. Of his cavalry, at the outset of the campaign Sherman complained bitterly of the "quality,"

²⁵Memoirs of General Sherman, 2: 23.

and did not cease to complain to the end. Johnston praised his to the last.

Polk's "Army of Mississippi" was composed of two divisions of infantry and artillery, commanded respectively by Major-General W W Loring and Major-General S. G. French, both West Point men. He had a division of cavalry commanded by Major-General W H. ("Red") Jackson. Jackson was in Mississippi and French in northern Alabama when, on May 4th, Polk had orders at Demopolis to reinforce Johnston. After he started with Loring, it seems the government changed his orders, but he kept on his way. So only Loring, with about 7000 men of that Army of Mississippi, was at Resaca.

Johnston confronted Sherman at Resaca behind admirable works, Hood on the right, Hardee in the centre and Polk on the left. Sherman attacked with vigor on the 13th but was repulsed. That was Friday. The fighting continued on Saturday and Sunday, 14th and 15th.

Those brigades of Wheeler's that had been with Longstreet in east Tennessee returned in April, the horses so broken in strength that they were sent to farms about Rome to rest and fatten. These now reported and are accounted for in the enumeration just given. The broken surface rendered cavalry of little avail at Resaca, so the men were dismounted and fought beside the infantry, for the most part. In Saturday's battle, however, Stoneman drove his cavalry upon the exposed field hospital of Hardee's corps. Wheeler, hearing this, remounted a part of his men, pursued Stoneman and drove him two miles, capturing prisoners and two stands of colors. On Sunday he was ordered across the Oostanaula to Calhoun, skirmishing as he went, but returned that night. Saturday General Hood advanced four guns fifty yards and before infantry support had been brought up opened fire with them. The enemy, massed in strong force near by, captured the pieces. Hood's infantry, now up, advanced, drove the captors and held the guns, but they could not bring them off because of the resolution of the foe to hold them. Neither could the enemy remove

them because of the determination of the Confederates that they should not. The Confederates abandoned them finally.

The army was in perfect morale. General Hardee had been married to a young lady of the "Canebrake" of Alabama while the army was yet at Dalton. The bride, following her distinguished husband within army lines, took there a pair of matched harness horses. Both were killed in the engagements under him. On the first day Polk's skirmishers, by mistaken orders, retired from a hill where it was incumbent upon them to remain. General Johnston seeing the blunder, rode rapidly to the point. There he found Colonel Conoley, of the 25th Alabama, and Lieutenant-Colonel Dawson of a Georgia regiment, restoring the line. These officers, acting with conspicuous gallantry and efficiency, so pleased the general that he asked for their names, exclaiming: "I never witnessed such a display of skill, nor have I ever seen troops under such discipline." Of course, the words of the commander spread abroad, inspiring in high degree to his army and most grateful to the friends of the troops at home. Some weeks later the Alabama officer came home on furlough, preceded by news of his command's compliment, and at once became the lion of the walk. The flag of the 40th Alabama, Pettus' brigade, was brought out of Vicksburg at Pemberton's surrender, July 4th, 1863, wrapped under the clothes of the color-bearer. It floated over the regiment in the hottest of the fight at Resaca, Sunday afternoon, borne still by him, P. S. Gilder. Gilder fell dead. After the heavy fighting, while the enemy yet raked the field with grape, consternation reigned upon the discovery that the regimental flag had not been recovered from the dead bearer's body. Clarence H. Ellerbe, son of a cotton planter of Dalton county, a volunteer from the cadet corps of the University of Alabama, then lieutenant and adjutant of the regiment, with two companions, Peteet and Kneighton, line officers of like rank, asked permission to recover the precious colors. They succeeded. They had gone, three together, for the sake of three chances in a desperate enterprise.

It was three days' fighting, preceded by strategic action

in both commanders. The Confederate strategy was the more daring and the better performed. The enemy lost 1740 killed; the Confederates 170, one in ten. The enemy's wounded were 3375; the Confederates about 350. Sherman had put his whole strength into the action at Resaca and had encountered all the troops Johnston commanded. He had achieved no success, except that Johnston had lost, killed and wounded, men that he could not replace with other men.

Sherman fixed the general plan of campaign at the outset; Johnston adopted a long-thought-out policy of war for the emergency. Sherman resolved to push Johnston back, with as little fighting as the end to be effected permitted, picking off from Johnston his videttes, scouts and skirmishers hourly, keeping as close to him as practicable, that by friction within limits the wear might be appreciable, and laying waste the country by breadths as wide as possible that the resources of war might be abridged. The severest problem with him was to keep up four hundred miles of railroad connection with his base at Louisville. He soon became apprehensive, however, of the inability of his government to keep the great ranks of his army full. Vallandigham's tracks were deep in the situation behind him. Revolt by the "Sons of Liberty" seemed near. Companies and battalions were organized and drilled by their officers, in secret. Kentucky, Indiana, Illinois and Ohio were in the project to release Confederate prisoners and make revolution. "The worst of the war is not yet begun," he wrote home. "The civil strife at the north has to come yet, and the tendency to anarchy to be cured. Look at matters in Kentucky and Missouri, and down the Mississippi and Arkansas, where shallow people have been taught to believe the war is over, and you will see trouble enough," etc.²⁶

After the lieutenants of Lee had floundered, on the promising field of Gettysburg, after the culpable sacrifice of the garrison at Vicksburg, and the fiasco at Chickamauga, General Johnston, in his own soldierly appreciation of conditions, reached an intellectual conclusion. In Mis-

²⁶Home Letters of General Sherman, p. 300.

issippi, awaiting the orders of his government in comparative idleness, he did not hesitate to unfold his thoughts to subordinate officers, nearest to him in regard.²⁷ If battles could be joined, promising decisive results, they should be fought. Battles of that description the Confederacy could afford to risk, but no other. On the principle that a commander should never do the thing his foe desired to have done, he would remove his army from the waste of mere attrition, to which the more numerous invader might seek to confine him. He would husband the army, which could not be recruited. Indecisive battles by Confederate armies should be avoided. This principle of war, he well knew, Mr. Davis would reject and General Bragg would never advise. On the other hand, Sherman, a great soldier, in daily combat, ever seeking his objective, "Joe Johnston," wrote home, confidentially: "I hardly think Johnston will give me a chance to fight a decisive battle, unless at such a disadvantage that I ought not to accept, and he is so situated that when threatened or pressed too hard he draws off, leaving us a barren victory. He will thus act all summer, unless he gains a great advantage in position or succeeds in breaking our roads."²⁸ Here we have a frank confession of the checkmate. There is no intimation that Sherman had reasonable hope to gain his "objective, Joe Johnston," and a commander's objective out of reach, his campaign necessarily becomes a failure. The whole north understood the situation. Hence the undercurrent of revolution in the northwest and the dismay of capital in the east.

General Sherman determined the character of the Dalton-Atlanta campaign, and we shall see somewhat of the part the Confederate side acted. Johnston did not lose his army, but rather increased it, despite Sherman's anxious proximity and energy. Sherman never reached his "objective," Johnston's army, in the capacity of conqueror. He never would have reached it in that capacity.

²⁷French's *Two Wars*, p. 297.

²⁸Sherman's *Home Letters*, p. 300.

Resaca was a battle. The whole of the two armies had fought for three days. The Confederate loss was irreparable, but it was one-tenth only of that of the invader.

Sunday at noon, General Sherman renewed, in his own way, his search for his "objective," Johnston's army. Leaving the bulk of his forces engaged in battle, he moved his right flank to cross the Oostanaula river, on the road to Calhoun, a railroad station, six miles on the road to Atlanta. A pontoon bridge had been laid. Twelve hours later Johnston crossed, Hood on the pontoon, Polk and Hardee on bridges, the cavalry fording and swimming the stream.

General Sherman was not content. He had compelled Johnston to follow him twenty miles, but the Confederate army was in fine spirits. When night fell on Monday the 16th, Sherman had made only five miles from Resaca and Wheeler was operating between the camps of the two armies. The invading commander issued peremptory orders to his greatest lieutenant, Thomas, to move forward and crush all in his way. Stoneman and Garrard, with strong cavalry, would join in the work.²⁹ On the 19th he telegraphed to Washington, "Johnston retires slowly, hitting hard if crowded."

Before Thomas could concentrate his divisions and move them forward, in execution of his orders to crush Johnston, Wheeler had struck them, one by one. All day on the 16th and 17th the Confederate cavalry leader revived the tactics of the Murfreesboro campaign. He would force the enemy to form line of battle, then gallop to the flank or rear, firing into their columns. The object obtained, he would withdraw. On the 16th he found on the Calhoun road a full battery of rifle guns, five, with their caissons. Sixty men from the Alabama brigade were dismounted and the whole hauled by hand in safety to the rear. The labor of the draft was severe.

Twenty miles from the crossing of the Oostanaula to the banks of the Etowah, in five days, was the itinerary of the armies. They had left Dalton on the 12th and were

²⁹Memoirs of General Sherman.

at Cassville on the 20th, thirty-five miles in eight days, Wheeler's work the cause of the slow progress in a momentous enterprise. It was thoroughly systematized work of the Confederate cavalry leader. He had prepared maps of the country, all the roads and streams, all the farmhouses and the names of the occupant families. A copy was given to every commanding officer sent out on special duty. Scouts made friends of the farmers, and their wives and daughters, and from these procured information let fall by the enemy's scouts who entered their houses.

On the 17th Polk wrote to the general of the army: "The cavalry is giving all the protection to the moving column that it requires."

Brigadier-General W. H. Jackson, of Polk's Army of the Mississippi, now arrived with some 4000 cavalry, his horses forty hours without feeding. Jackson never was required to report to Wheeler.

The afternoon of the 17th General Sherman rode far to the front to see the collision with Johnston's rear, near Adairsville. He says Hardee's troops moved with most admirable precision. All this he saw from an eminence, where he sat his horse, surrounded by a group. The Confederates threw a shell and the group scattered.

The general rode rapidly back, giving orders that Garrard should strike the railroad, from Rome to Kingston, on Johnston's left flank. Stoneman must ride to the rear of the Confederates and strike the railroad to Atlanta, and burn the Etowah river railroad bridge. Wheeler encountered Stoneman, drove him back upon his infantry lines and the bridge he was sent to destroy remained intact. In the moment of collision, Allen's brigade was seen to be hard pressed. The 8th Confederate was ordered to ride at full speed, over rough woodland, to its relief. Allen's men, hearing the shout of the approaching succor, took fresh heart, answered shout by shout, and pressed onward. It was too much for the foe. They broke in confusion. Yelling and peppering their backs, the Confederates continued the pursuit. A fresh bounty-paid German, very massive of form, who could speak no English and who

had yet to learn the art of riding a horse, fell from his mount flat on his back in the road. Captain Flood, leading his Mississippi company, was a very tall man. When in a charge, he was wont to stand straight up in his short stirrups, swinging his revolver pistol high over his head. The "Hessian," now having risen to the posture of a tailor on his bench, in the sand, at Flood's approach threw himself again flat on his back, snatched from his foot one of a pair of heavy new boots, held it out as an improvised flag of truce and signal of surrender. Flood drew up, swearing mightily. He was not to be bribed by a new boot, sadly scarce as such footgear was in the Confederacy.

Johnston reached Calhoun ahead of the enemy, fighting, as Sherman wrote, "all the time," yet looking for ground favorable to his battle. He did not find it. Eighteen hours of needed rest in bivouac was ordered. To secure the repose of the army, Wheeler was notified to extraordinary vigilance and Cheatham's infantry was sent to him.

The renewed march was taken up for Adairsville, some eight miles on the railroad.

Describing his daily experiences and expectations, General Sherman wrote at this time: "Our greatest danger is from cavalry, in which arm of the service the enemy is superior to us in quantity and quality, cutting our wagons or railroad."³⁰ Jackson had not then come up and Wheeler's cavalry alone had been at work. In "quantity" it was not the half part of the invader's. There was nothing in it but the "quality," the men who had learned to ride and handle a horse in infancy. Expert physiologists of modern times aver that horseback riding is singularly strengthening to the brain. Another point in the problem. Grant's favorite cavalry leader, William Sooy Smith, wrote, just as the forces were gathering for this campaign: "It is exceedingly difficult to make volunteers take good care of their horses. Those manifestly unfit for service in the beginning they will kill." On the other hand, the southern cavalymen furnished their own horses and a southern youth loved his horse tenderly.

³⁰Memoirs of General Sherman.

Three miles eastward of Adairsville, was Cassville, a hamlet, not on the railroad but three or four miles to the north. There the army halted. General Johnston was in fine spirits. He felt the ardor inspired by the devotion of the troops to him and the confidence justified in the recent contact with the invader. A group of his officers standing, early in the evening, about his bivouac fire, news came of Lee's glorious fighting at Spottsylvania Court House. Johnston exclaimed: "*The Confederacy is as fixed an institution as England or France!*"

Some subordinate Confederate officer feared Sherman would never fight; that when Johnston crossed the Etowah, he would turn and hasten to Grant.

Out from Adairsville two roads ran, converging at Cassville, the distance between some four miles at the widest, and the country wooded. Sherman, following from Adairsville would divide his army, it was assumed, on the two roads, the smaller section on the upper or northerly road and the larger on the Kingston road. Johnston here resolved to fight and ordered Hood to take position on the upper road, Polk posted in the wooded space between the roads, and Hardee on the lower or Kingston road. He counted on Hood's opening the battle, as he met the marching column of the enemy; Polk would take up the battle and pass it on to Hardee. This was the disposition of the troops made at sunrise. At seven thirty in the morning, at the head of the regiments was read the following spirited battle order:

"HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF TENNESSEE,

"Cassville, Ga., May 19, 1864.

"Soldiers of the Army of Tennessee: You have displayed the highest qualities of the soldier—firmness in combat, patience under toil. By your courage and skill you have repulsed every assault of the enemy. By marches by day and by marches by night you have defeated every attempt upon your communications.

"Your communications are secured. You will now turn and march to meet the advancing columns. Fully confiding

in the conduct of the officers, the courage of the soldiers, I lead you to battle.

"We may confidently trust that the Almighty Father will still reward the patriot's toils and bless the patriot's banners.

"Cheered by the success of your brothers in Virginia and beyond the Mississippi, our efforts will equal theirs. Strengthened by His support, those efforts will be crowned with like glories.

"J. E. JOHNSTON,
"General."

Hardee's Memoranda says: "May 19th: Formed line of battle on left of army. Enemy in sight and skirmishing began. Troops wild with enthusiasm and delight."

General Johnston rode out with all three lieutenant-generals to show them their places. The battle order was being read everywhere and wildly cheered.

Adjutant-General Makall rode to Hood with a message from the general commanding to "make quick work." At twenty minutes after ten a courier came up with an oral message to the general from Hood: "The enemy is close by, on the Canton road"—on his flank and rear. The general said: "It cannot be." Calling for a map, he examined it, sent the adjutant-general back, at a run, on a fresh horse of his own, and called off the movement. Time lost had been fatal.³¹

At the time General Johnston reported to the president: "Having ordered a general attack, while the officer charged with the lead was advancing, he was deceived by a false report that a heavy column of the enemy had turned out right and was close upon him, and took a defensive position. When the mistake was discovered, it was too late to resume the movement."³²

General Johnston immediately rode to the rear of Cassville to examine a long wooded ridge for a new position for the army, a mile or two away. General Polk rode with

³¹Off. War Rec., vol. xxxviii, Part III, p. 983.

³²Johnston's Narrative; Hood's Advance and Retreat: Makall's Diary.

him and they were accompanied by the chief of staff, General Makall. When they returned, the army was moved to the ridge—"a broad, open and elevated valley in front, completely commanded by troops occupying the crest." Upon this ridge the line of battle was immediately formed, Hood on the right, Polk in the centre, Hardee on the left.

However favorable the new position on the ridge, was it not an error to have recalled the battle of the forenoon? It is certain General Sherman would have been taken at serious disadvantage had the order to Hood been repeated and his delayed advance been insisted on. Sherman did not get his army together on that day, May 19th, until about night. In the forenoon it was scattered over the country, for fifteen miles.³³ He had not expected battle. Johnston's halt to offer battle surprised Sherman. Describing the situation, he says, when he discovered Johnston facing him in battle order, he "rode rapidly over some rough gravel hills," to find Thomas, "and ordered him to push forward his deployed lines as rapidly as possible"; he "hurriedly sent orders to McPherson to hasten forward"; "as night was approaching, I ordered two field batteries to close up at a gallop," etc.; all this happening within the enemy's lines hours after Hood had been recalled and while the Confederates, almost unmolested, were examining the ridge and posting the several corps upon a new line of battle.

All was ready on the ridge, and General Sherman, with his accustomed energy, was collecting his troops for combat. Sherman planted artillery on an elevation a mile away and threw shot into Johnston's lines on the long ridge the same afternoon.

On this mild May afternoon, so prolific of history, Captain Morris, engineer of Polk's staff, arrived from Demopolis at that general's quarters just as the general came in from his ride with Johnston on the ridge. The engineer was directed to mount a horse and examine the position assigned to Polk's corps, whether it was defensible from the enfilade from the elevation, a mile away, upon

³³Memoirs of General Sherman, vol. ii.

which Sherman had placed the artillery.³⁴ Morris hurried off to make his survey before darkness closed in. General Johnston rode away to the left to assist Hardee in placing his divisions for the morrow's battle.

Citizens of the village, finding their homes between two armies preparing to wage battle, became excited. Some went away, leaving everything behind; others moved away with household effects. The remainder waited at home to see what would happen.

As General Johnston returned from Hardee's wing about sunset, Colonel Gale, of Polk's staff, saluted and delivered a message from his chief. The commanding general was invited to sup with the ranking lieutenant-general and there meet the two other lieutenant-generals. Governor Harris of Tennessee came up with some lunch, and the commanding general, with others present, sat on the bank of a little branch to take dinner. Johnston, in confident mood, said: "We will be ready and happy to receive the enemy tomorrow." About eight o'clock he walked to Polk's. Hood was there, but not Hardee. Hood introduced the subject. The enfilade cannonading of the enemy, late that afternoon, had demoralized the exposed troops, especially a part of French's division. Polk joined the conversation and both lieutenant-generals emphatically stated their belief that the enemy commanded the position on the ridge and that it could not be held for an hour. Both agreed that a direct advance upon the foe might be made the next morning.

General Johnston refused to accept their conclusions. He considered the position on the ridge "the best for battle that he had seen a Confederate army occupy at any time in the war." He believed the enfilading fire of the enemy's artillery could be avoided, by throwing up additional works that night, and he did not expect to see General Sherman advance across the broad and open valley to the attack without certain and signal defeat. He did not, on the other hand, see that an attack upon Sherman, in position, chosen by the latter among the very hills where the enfilading

³⁴Leonidas Polk, vol. ii, p. 351.

batteries stood, promised results which would justify the certain losses.

As Johnston walked out of Polk's quarters, Hardee met him on the steps. Hood, present, remarked the plans for the next morning had been changed, that the army would cross the Etowah that night. Hardee expressed great surprise, declaring his anxiety to fight, as had been ordered, and expressing his confidence in his position, although, as Johnston thought, it was the least tenable of any on the line.

The matter is so weighty here that these corroborative facts and circumstances may not be omitted. General French, as we have seen, joined the army with his division at Adairsville. He took his place in Polk's Army of Mississippi on the ridge, with some 5000 men. French says of the meeting at Polk's supper:

"After dark, as I was returning from dinner, I met General Hood, who asked me to ride over with him to see General Johnston at General Polk's headquarters and take supper.

"After supper was over, Hood and Polk asked Johnston to a conference, that they had previously arranged, and Johnston asked me to go with him. At the conference, at this time, Hardee was not present. Hood commenced by declaring that his line and Polk's line were so enfiladed by the federal artillery that they could not be held. Polk was not so strenuous. Johnston insisted on fighting.

The little firing that had taken place almost ceased before dark. If Hood's line was enfiladed, I did not discover it."³⁵

The discussion had been long, Johnston favoring, Polk and Hood opposing a battle in defense of the ridge. Johnston told Colonel J. L. M. Curry, of Wheeler's staff, two or three days later, that it was a sad blunder, the contention of Hood and Polk, but he could not order battle opposed by two of the three corps commanders.

General Johnston sent messages to all his staff to report

³⁵Two Wars, pp. 196, 374, 379.

to him at once, mounted. He sent Curry off to Wheeler to announce that the army would move that night to cross the Etowah, with instructions that the cavalry should protect the rear. It was two o'clock in the morning when the orders to move were issued. At dawn next morning, the 20th, Sherman intended to attack. His skirmishers advanced accordingly. Passing through the open, into the wood, they found no resistance. Entering upon the ridge, they found only the ashes of the Confederate bivouac fires. Sherman's entire army had been concentrated in the night, between the village of Cassville and the top of the ridge.

The withdrawal of 50,000 men, 2000 wagons, hundreds of cannon, caissons, etc., etc., from the very presence of 100,000 of the enemy without detection was a remarkable demonstration of discipline and confidence in the ranks. The trains were all moved, the camp equipage all loaded, instructions to pickets and skirmishers to be left for final withdrawal, by orders issued about midnight and executed so as to put all encumbrances and troops on the roads about two hours before dawn. No property was abandoned, no stragglers, pickets or skirmishers left. A pontoon was laid over the Etowah, eight miles from the ridge. The infantry and artillery used this, the railroad bridge and a public bridge near by, while the cavalry forded or swam the stream. The thorough organization and efficiency of headquarters staff and couriers were now demonstrated. "The staff all love General Johnston, but all are afraid of him," was common remark. Devoted as the army was to its commander, the sentiment of attachment was founded on perfect confidence in his military capacity, in the even-handed justice of his methods of administration and in the continual evidence of his courage in action. The whole machinery of the army was moved, under most difficult conditions and in most trying situations, in the presence of a wily, resolute and powerful foe, day and night without disorder. It was said the army did not lose a meal week in and week out. If it was not at rest, meals on the roadside were corncakes, stacked, each man drawing one as he marched by.

Desertions were not unknown. This crime was severely punished. I remember an instance of the general's conduct. In the thirty days' fighting in the woods, thirteen deserters were returned to camp. They were, under ordinary circumstances, good soldiers. Now they were duly tried and condemned to be shot. The news of the sentence of the trial court reached the army. A lengthy petition for the commanding general's clemency was sent to him, accompanied by the pledge of the signers to see that the deserters should do good service if spared. The general was apt in expressing his more tender emotions. On this occasion he issued an eloquent order, read at the head of every regiment, denouncing the crime but granting the petition, not so much, he said, to spare the guilty as to gratify the faithful signers of the petition. In a previous instance, a good soldier deserted from a Georgia infantry regiment, on the Atlantic coast, to reenlist in a western cavalry command. He had served many months in the cavalry and was noted for good conduct. He was accidentally detected in the ranks, on duty. He was arrested, tried and condemned to be shot. The law so required. General Johnston was most earnestly appealed to by officers of high rank who knew the man and his fine, soldierly qualities. Finally, the colonel visited him in his quarters, at the last moment, appealing for clemency. The prompt and terse reply was: "Colonel, my orders must be obeyed." The man was shot.

Sherman halted in front of a farmhouse near Cassville, dismounted and took a seat on the porch, where the women sat gazing upon the passing troops. They showed him a newspaper with Johnston's battle order of the 19th. He affected much amusement: any one of his three armies could handle Johnston; he was surprised that the "secesh" thought of fighting a battle; the press had caused the war; the war would last as long as every fool was allowed to publish falsehood and slander at discretion and pay officers in such stuff for the use of government rations and government horses to ride.

Mrs. Johnston, from Atlanta, now wrote to Lieutenant-

General Polk a short letter, tactful and candid. The general had never been baptized. She desired the bishop-general to perform this rite without further delay and the general had already approved her application. So Polk baptized the great commander, in a little home at Adairsville, as he had baptized the brave and maimed lieutenant-general the week before in the little home at Dalton. A most reverent body of soldiers were those, high and low, who followed the Confederate cross of battle.

The venerable bishop-general had, when the army under Bragg lay at Murfreesboro, performed the marriage ceremony of his church, in all its beauty of form, for the famous General John H. Morgan, a young widower by demise of the wife he had left on his Kentucky farm when he became a soldier. The bride was one of the fairest of the Valley maidens. The guests at the wedding were Generals Bragg, Hardee, Wheeler, Breckinridge and many others, all in full uniform, so dazzling in gold lace and stars and wreaths—a most distinguished company. The connection of officers, civil and military, of the Confederacy with the Protestant Episcopal Church was almost as pronounced as that of the official servants of the British government with their established religion,—President Davis, Secretary Memminger, more than one secretary of war, General Lee and his kin, J. E. Johnston, Bragg, Hardee, Hood, Kirby Smith, Dabney Maury, Gorgas, Stuart, Stewart, Hampton, Wheeler, Richard Taylor, etc.

The campaign now rises to greatest interest to students of the noble art of war. The military history of an army of professional soldiers is one thing, whilst that of enfranchised citizens, who may legally pursue the conflict or suppress it at will, is quite another thing. The military history of free citizens is the supremest test of the physical, intellectual and moral character of a people. In the essential conditions of discipline, long maintained, by which maneuvers are made possible, by which confidence is maintained, by which ordnance, and rations are supplied, the campaign, here so inadequately described, is most remark-

able. The rank and file of both armies were, for the most part, from their homes in the valley of the Mississippi. The rank and file of both armies used the same tongue, native to them.

Johnston, across the Etowah, followed the railroad through the mountains. Lieutenant W T Sherman, U. S. A., twenty years before, had been ordered from Charleston, S. C., to Alatoona on special duty of several weeks. Daily it was his wont to ride his horse through all the region about, long before Georgia had built the railroad. Earlier knowledge of the topography now well served the general of the invading host. He would not follow Johnston, among the mountains. He dared much, but not so much as that.

Johnston rested two or three miles on the eastern side of the Etowah. Monday, May 23d, Wheeler heard General Johnston speak of the situation and of the probable plans of Sherman, first to cross the Etowah, lower down, to toll the Confederates away from the railroad and the mountains, then to wedge himself in between the Confederates and the mountains and railroad. During the same afternoon, Wheeler, under orders, crossed the Etowah. Leaving his command in bivouac on the north side, he took 100 men and rode off in the night on a scout toward Cartersville, Sherman's extreme right. He was away that night and the next day, Tuesday. At midnight he returned and woke up the camp. All were put in motion. Cassville was attacked, offering feeble resistance. The 1st Georgia was sent away to Cass station, some four miles southward, to gather information. The Georgians sent back word there was work for the general there. The general came up at the head of Kelly's division. The train guards fled and the Confederates captured 350 wagons and their teams, all loaded with supplies for General Sherman's flank movement to Dallas, twenty miles south, and away from the railroad. This was the masterly movement to get around the mountains at Alatoona. Wheeler started 80 of the wagons back to Cassville. The remainder captured were burned. General Sherman now appeared. Wheeler, riding with the

80 wagons, saw the enemy's cavalry approaching on his column, "in fine style and great ferocity." He saw them a mile away form upon the edge of the field and charge toward him at full speed. The impetus greatly pleased him. Poor, jaded cavalry horses could not run a mile in line of battle. He would await their onset. Calling the commanding officers of the 2d Tennessee and the 8th Texas to him, he quickly instructed them to advance at the walk, in good order, until a certain point on the field was reached. Then the two regiments must charge with utmost determination. The order was well executed; the tactics proved most effective; the long run of the enemy had broken their alignment; the compact mass of Wheeler's men routed them in great disorder.

Wheeler returned to General Johnston, confirmed the report of Sherman's movement toward Dallas and delivered to the army quartermaster 70 loaded wagons and their teams, 300 equipped cavalry horses and a number of mules. He also marched in 182 prisoners. By instruction of the general, Chief of Staff Makall wrote: "General Johnston congratulates you on your success in the enemy's rear. He wishes the captured wagons sent to the chief quartermaster "

Hardee was at once hurried off on the road to Dallas to the southward. Polk followed and Hood brought up the rear. Dallas, the capital of Paulding county, was nearer to Atlanta, and by good roads, than Alatoona, the distance only two days' march—fifty miles. The situation was extremely critical. The loss of several hundred wagons at Cass station, on the way with rations, and the sparse supply in the country left General Sherman's men and horses hungry. His forces scattered; McPherson on his right, Thomas in the centre, Schofield on the left were not in supporting distance of one another in an emergency. Hooker's corps of three divisions of Thomas' Army of the Cumberland, May 25th, drove in a cavalry picket guarding a bridge over Pumpkin Vine Creek and put out the fire upon the structure. Geary's division of Hooker's corps, advancing, met the consolidated 32d and 58th Alabama infantry, Bush Jones, colonel commanding, the strength

300 men. This colonel's frame was massive, his nerve strong, his hair flaming red. He had orders to "hold his ground" and stop the enemy, for the troops behind were not yet up nor their lines formed. The young lawyer held his ground. He fought so vigorously and resisted so pertinaciously with his little force that General Sherman, who was near, reported that the head of his column, Hooker's corps, had been delayed by a brigade.

Sherman here ordered Hooker to "take the church (New Hope, a shell of a house in the woods) that night if possible." General Johnston, too, was near by. He rode to the front, and, calling for Major-General Stewart, did not find him. He left word and rode away. The position must be held. Stevenson's division was on the road approaching and must not be broken into by men falling back. One brigade of Stevenson's came up just as the enemy approached. Stewart's division was in line, Baker's Alabama brigade on the right. Clayton's Alabama brigade on the left, Stovall's Georgia brigade in the centre, R. L. Gibson's Louisiana brigade and J. C. Brown's Tennessee brigade were the others. Eldridge's artillery, 16 guns, was in position. On the line of Baker and Clayton there were some rude and hasty obstructions—logs piled. Major-General Stewart, commanding, had returned. The foe advanced, by division front, three ranks deep, colors flying and with great ardor. After throwing a few shells, they rushed forward, five and six deep, to within fifty feet of Stewart's line. Stewart, on his roan, rode down his line, encouraging his men as they lay prone upon the ground, protected by the crest. Eldridge showered shot and shell; musketry rattled incessantly. "Do you need help?" Johnston sent word. "None," answered Stewart. For two hours the struggle lasted. At one of Fenner's Louisiana guns, three brothers served. One fell, the second took his place and fell; the third stepped into his place, received a desperate wound, but stood above the dead until a comrade came to relieve him. About sunset Hooker called off his men, leaving some 700 dead where they fell. He reported his loss at 1665 on the narrow ground. The Confederates,

on the brow of the hill, had the advantage of position, as the enemy's fire passed over with little effect. The Confederate loss was insignificant. The enemy fought to the foot of the works.

The commanding generals of the rival armies were both near the scene of strife. Neither had divined the exact mind of the other. General Sherman lay down by a log and there remained until dawn, notwithstanding the falling showers.

This was the battle of New Hope church, Wednesday afternoon, May 25th.

Hardee's itinerary says of that night: "General Johnston, believing that Sherman had at last made up his mind to deliver battle, made his dispositions accordingly." Of the 26th, he says: "Contrary to general expectations, there was no general engagement, but the day was spent in skirmishing and maneuvering for position. The enemy is again trying to flank us, this time on the right."

Of the next day General Sherman says: "Owing to the difficult nature of the ground and dense forests it took us several days to deploy close to the enemy, etc. On the 28th General McPherson was on the point of closing to his left on General Thomas, in front of New Hope church, to enable me with the rest of the army to extend still more to the left and to envelop the enemy's right, when suddenly the enemy made a bold and daring assault on him at Dallas. Fortunately our men had made good breastworks and gave the enemy a terrible and bloody repulse." General Johnston says of this affair that, finding the enemy were moving, Major-General Bate was ordered upon a reconnoissance in force, to see if they held their works. When his first brigade attacked, the enemy's cannonade was so heavy that, in the woods, each of the other brigade commanders thought all were engaged but his. Thus all went into action before the error was detected. On the same day, when the three lieutenant-generals met at army headquarters, as was their wont, Hood volunteered the opinion that the extreme left flank of the enemy was vulnerable to attack. The commanding general assented. Hood thereupon was ordered

to move that night, so as to force the left flank of the enemy obliquely by dawn, and then precipitate the action, and Polk and Hardee, being informed, were ordered to take up the battle in order. That would be the 29th. All waited on Hood until past ten o'clock, when he sent word that the enemy had so concentrated and fortified at night that it was inexpedient, in his opinion, to attempt an assault. So there was no general engagement.

It is somewhat amusing to note that while General Sherman's official report makes note of many successive days' work by him in the month of May, relating with fidelity the 25th, 26th, 28th, he avoids all mention of the 27th. It will not be amiss here to discuss the great event, omitted by him, of that day. At seven o'clock the morning of the 27th, Cleburne, who had been ordered to the extreme right and transferred for the occasion from Hardee to Hood, sent out Govan with his Arkansas regiment to reconnoitre. Govan returned to report the enemy in heavy column moving to turn the Confederate right, that is, moving upon Cleburne. Wheeler had sent Brigadier-General John H. Kelly with his brigade to watch the infantry front, and the cavalry now received and most gallantly resisted the advance of the foe. General Johnston gives the following account:

"Between five and six o'clock in the afternoon, Kelly's skirmishers were driven in by a body of Federal cavalry, whose advance was supported by the 4th corps. This advance was retarded by the resistance of Kelly's troops, fighting on foot, behind little heaps of loose stones. As soon as the noise of this conflict revealed to Major-General Cleburne the maneuver, to turn his right, he brought the right brigade of his second line, Granberry's, to Kelly's support."

Very serious work now developed. The fight known as the Pickett's Settlement fight was an extremely interesting one of the hundreds of partial engagements of this marvelous campaign. Kelly's cavalry received the advance of ten times their number, dismounted men, lying several feet apart, and each man's head behind an improvised shelter—a pile of stones set up by himself. There he



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loaded and fired, and repeated the work as the solid mass of the foe advanced rapidly, crying, "Now we've got you from behind your logs, damn you!" Govan was behind, firing on the same deep, black column. The enemy's line stretched to the right of Govan, and was about to flank him, when Granberry's brigade came up at a run. So rapid and resolute was the pressure of the foe that the reinforcing brigade fired in a run, each man discharging his piece as the file turned into line.

The enemy now did not try to overlap Cleburne's right, but sought by deep formation to run over the Confederates; nevertheless, so great was his superiority in numbers that a considerable force was deflected through a small farm, on that flank, and had gone forty to fifty yards to the rear when a consolidated Arkansas infantry regiment, commanded by Colonel Baucum, confronted the advance of the detachment. Kelly had, in earlier months, commanded one of the component parts of this regiment. We have already seen that this splendid young soldier, a West Point cadet who resigned to engage in the war, possessed to a remarkable degree the qualities of a leader of soldiers in action. He now rode to the head of the Arkansians and with far-reaching, clear tones called, "Forward!" With a bound, they sprang, cheering, to Granberry's right flank. The resolute and powerful foe pressed forward. They came to within thirty feet of the muzzles of the Confederate line, fired and fell back. A color-bearer came forward, planted his colors well in advance of his line and fell, another, and another, and yet the fourth soldier took the colors up, all but the last falling in the inspiring effort.

Cleburne now called up Lowery's combined Mississippi and Alabama brigade. They came at a run, each man firing as had Granberry's, as he wheeled to his place in line.

Night came on but it brought only a lull in the battle. The Confederates held their original position on the decline of the hill; the enemy must march up the steep opposite to receive their fire, at close range, on the summit. They had not retired out of musket range. They were at the foot of the hill, in bad humor, too. They were almost

the bravest of the brave. They even formed and lay down so near that their footsteps could be heard in Cleburne's line. From time to time they fired musketry viciously upon the Confederate position, which had no kind of breastworks or other protection save the top of the hill.

Cleburne, irritated at this manner of fighting, ordered Granberry with his Texans to push out scouts and skirmish on his front. The foe, in solid array, was too near by for this. So Granberry fixed bayonets and his whole line, with rebel yell, dashed down the hill into the darkness. This was too much for the foe. They fled in utter rout leaving at least 700 of their dead on the field. Cleburne reported his loss at 85 killed and 363 wounded. His force was 4683 muskets. He picked up on the hillside, where the foe fought, more than 1200 small arms. He estimated their loss at not less than 3000 killed and wounded and he took 332 prisoners, losing none in that class.

The enemy at New Hope church was Hooker's corps, and at Pickett's Settlement, Howard's, with Palmer's division temporarily attached. At New Hope, Stewart's division, with small protection from rude breastworks, did the fighting, supported by 16 field-pieces. At Pickett's Settlement Cleburne had some eight or ten field-pieces in position on the left of his line of battle that enfiladed the enemy's reserve. Both engagements were practically fought by infantry and up to the time of Johnston's retreat certainly there was no sign of demoralization of troops. The two battlefields were two miles apart. As the troops, next day, moved from the field, seeing General Johnston sitting on the steps of a house near by, they cheered him lustily. The general had been near the field the afternoon before. He issued a spirited order of congratulation to them, as was his wont. He never failed to enter into the joys of his troops nor to compel their unquestioning obedience to him.

The cavalry of Kelly's division had fought, side by side, with the infantry. Colonel Allen, of the 1st Alabama, was specially prominent on the field, riding along his line, from



A. J. Milner

end to end, in a greatly exposed position. His horse was wounded and some casualties befell his staff, riding with him. When the scene closed, Granberry's Texans, impressed by their good fighting, shouted as they passed, "Hurrah for the cavalry!"

President Davis thought Johnston might have struck Sherman profitably with his whole army at this stage of the campaign, even though he had but half the numbers of the invader. Perhaps so. "If thou art a great general, Marius, come down and fight." "If thou art a great general, Silo, make me come down and fight."

No more ready and courageous commander than Sherman was in the field. He was not conducting a campaign only, but a long-drawn-out war. "But in all times, the wise and brave man's toil has been the sport of fools."

Under date of June 13th, General Polk, opposed, on general principles, to war behind breastworks, wrote to his daughter from the field: "Our army is in good spirits and confident, under the blessing of God, of success in the coming conflict. It is also in high condition."³⁶

At another date he wrote: "This army is the mainstay of the Confederacy and if well handled will justify that estimate of it."

In fact, the day after the battle of New Hope church, that is, on the 26th, General Johnston issued orders to bring on a general engagement. Hood, on the right, was to open, Polk in the centre take up the battle and Hardee on the left to follow him.

Grant wrote anxiously to Sherman, and President Lincoln cautioned him. Sherman, well comprehending the whole situation, realizing his peril, never lost his head. He could do nothing save the thing he was then doing. He could not feed reinforcements if they should be offered him. He could not fight, except as Johnston permitted. The fighting at Dalton, the three days' conflict at Resaca, Wheeler's defeat of his cavalry in their attempt to reach Johnston's

³⁶Leonidas Polk, vol. ii, p. 343.

rear at Rome and at the Etowah railroad bridge, was experience not to be treated other than as a prudent commander would. New Hope and the Pickett Settlement encounter were later reminders of the duty of caution. June 12th, he wrote home: "I am now one hundred and five miles from Chattanooga. I suppose the

people are impatient why I don't push on more rapidly to Atlanta, but those who are here are satisfied with the progress. It is as much as our railroad can do to supply us with bread, meat, corn, and I cannot leave the railroad to swing on Johnston's flank or rear, without giving him the railroad, which I cannot do," etc. In the same letter, he writes: "We have devoured the land and our animals eat up the wheat and cornfields close. All the people retire before us and desolation is behind."³⁷

"Place Forrest and ten thousand cavalry behind Sherman, between his army and Chattanooga," was now the cry sent up from all intelligent citizens and from the press. "I will gladly serve under General Forrest if he is sent to this army," declared Wheeler, who ranked him. Governor Brown made earnest appeal to the president to send Forrest from Mississippi to break the railroad behind Sherman and keep it broken, but was severely rebuked for obtruding his opinions upon the government, charged by the law and the constitution with the duty of directing all military matters. Again and again General Johnston appealed, at this crisis, to the government to send Forrest to his rear to operate on Sherman's railroad connections. He was asked: "Why don't you send Wheeler? He and Jackson have 10,000 cavalry." "What will become of the main army, without eyes and ears?" replied Johnston. Johnston, wearying of his failure with General Bragg and the civil authorities at Richmond, appealed to General Stephen D. Lee, commanding in Mississippi. Lee, fine soldier that he was, started Forrest on this call at two different times. Each time he heard reports of a raid, out from Memphis, by the enemy's cavalry, threatening Mississippi, and recalled him from the road, in the northeastern part of that

³⁷Sherman's Home Letters, 298, 299.

state. Johnston, protesting against this action, declared the choice was between Sherman's safety or the security of a narrow belt of country, liable to a raid.

Knowing the profound anxiety of his government, Sherman telegraphed the exact condition that confronted him, day by day. May 29th he reported: "Yesterday we pressed our lines close up, in close contact with the enemy, who has covered his whole front with breastworks of timber and earth." Three days later he dispatched Halleck that Schofield had been engaged feeling Johnston's lines and had discovered the whole woods full of dismounted cavalry, in rifle-pits and behind improvised works built of rails and logs. Brushing these aside, he found infantry behind "finished breastworks" that were inconvenient to carry by assault.

A feature of the campaign by Johnston was his use of his cavalry. His lines were constantly overlapped by the longer lines of Sherman. To provide against disaster from this cause, the cavalry, armed with rifles, were dismounted and placed on the flank exposed. If occasion required, they could remount and move rapidly against further extension of the foe.

The nature of the combat, unparalleled, as described by participants at the time, will suffice. We shall bring up the invader's accounts. General Sherman reported to Chief of Staff Halleck: "There has been continuous battle, our lines are in close contact and the battle is incessant." "Johnston must have fifty miles of entrenchments; we gain ground daily, fighting all the time."³⁸ The "fifty miles of entrenchments" were along the army front, as it moved over the eight or ten miles of space between New Hope and the railroad. Sherman's entrenchments were the same as Johnston's. Sherman's were built by negro men, fugitives from the farms and plantations along his march. He paid them ten dollars a month, with army rations. Sherman says he rode ten miles a day, in and out of his lines, and never saw more than a dozen Confederates in a group. Even the skirmishers fired from rifle-pits. No man could

³⁸Memoirs of General Sherman.

lift his head above a breastwork without being shot at. The colonel of a Missouri Confederate regiment sat at the foot of a tree reading a newspaper. He fell, shot through the heart by one of the enemy's sharpshooters clothed in green leaves and perched in a tree-top, so far away that the report of his rifle was not heard. Colonel Candy, of Ohio, commanding a brigade, makes report of his experiences on June 15:

"The order was received to charge the enemy's works. Their skirmishers were driven in precipitately. Their works were found to be very strong and garrisoned with infantry and artillery. Not being in sufficient force, their works could not be carried. My first line succeeded in getting within thirty yards of their works, etc. .

The remainder of the brigade immediately threw up breastworks, under a galling fire from the enemy's sharpshooters. Many casualties occurred, but the position was maintained. During the night temporary works were thrown up and the enemy was harassed constantly from the fire of our sharpshooters, who kept the enemy from working their artillery to a considerable extent. Remained in this position until two o'clock of the morning of (June) 17th, when it was discovered that the enemy had abandoned his works and left our immediate front.

June 19th the enemy had fallen back about one and a half miles and taken up a new position: formed line (the invaders) on the left of the 3d brigade of this division and threw up entrenchments." This graphic account of the conduct of a single brigade of Sherman's army is descriptive of both armies in the thirty days, from Pickett's Settlement to Kenesaw Mountain. The firing never ceased, night or day. "There was the red glow of the artillery amidst the spark-like flashes of the small arms, that looked in the distance like innumerable fireflies." The severest hardships were endured.

General French, of Polk's army corps, entered on his diary: "At four o'clock in the evening I received orders to withdraw our lines. It is raining to-night. This, with previous rains, rendered the roads as bad as they well can

be and the night was very dark. Mud, mud everywhere, and the soldiers sink over their shoe-tops at every step. It took seven hours to move six miles. At seven o'clock the morning of the 5th we were in line of battle on Lost Mountain."

The actual movements of the army, under orders, must interest all men in authority over large bodies. No study of such conditions can be more interesting. June 1st, when the thirty days' fighting was well on, the following order was issued by the Confederate commander:

"I. The army will shift its position to-night and take another in the neighborhood of Lost Mountain.

"II. The troops will be drawn from the lines at eleven o'clock at night in such order as the corps commanders may direct.

"III. The skirmishers will be left on the line until two o'clock and until the infantry of the line has been put in march. A staff officer from each division and each corps will be left to direct the movement of skirmishers. Engineers will mark the lines and the whole cavalry will protect the movement."

General Johnston established a signal station on Kenesaw Mountain, seven hundred feet above sea level. Other peaks near were, Little Kenesaw, Barren, Lost and Pine mountains. Green farms and white farmhouses stood in the vale below. Bate's division of Hardee's corps occupied Pine Mountain, artillery in redoubts on the crest and rifle-pits on the side, held by infantry. Between the enemy, eight hundred yards off, and the rifle-pits were army wagons and mules tied to the wheels.

On the morning of June 14th Hardee requested General Johnston to ride with him, to determine whether Bate should be recalled. Polk heard of the intended ride and, saying he desired to see the ground, called Lieutenant W. M. Polk, his youthful son and aide, to him, marked off on the ground with his boot toe certain changes he desired should be made at once in the disposition of his own troops, promising to be back in a couple of hours.

The general commanding, Hardee, whose lines were to be examined, Polk and Major-General W. H. Jackson, of the cavalry, with a number of staff officers rode to the summit of Pine Mountain. All dismounted, throwing the reins to orderlies. Two batteries were on the summit, in redoubts, one a part of the famous Washington artillery, of New Orleans, and the other the Beauregard battery, so called because commanded by the young son of the hero of Manassas. General Johnston at once mounted Captain Beauregard's works, lifting his field-glasses and surveying the scene in front. A shot aimed at him from the enemy's rifle-guns, in full view, passed. The general retained his position, turning his glasses in the direction of the smoke from the gun below, but gave peremptory orders to his staff to disperse.

At the same hour General Sherman had ridden along his front, examining the ground to find a suitable place to concentrate upon to break through Johnston's right and reach the railroad before him—a ceaseless effort. Sherman, Logan and other officers were standing near the battery that had fired at Johnston. The Confederates returned that fire from the rifle-pits and a ball passing close to Sherman, went on through Logan's coat-sleeve and struck a staff officer full in the breast, disabling him for the war. Sherman, now remounted, rode off.

General Polk, after his narrow escape, separated himself from the others in Captain Beauregard's redoubt and walked along the crest of the mountain, his hands clasped behind his back. Sherman had complained to the captain commanding his guns that Hardee had been permitted to remain where he was. So the firing from the enemy now became serious. A rifle cannon ball struck General Polk below the shoulder joint and passed through his chest and both arms. The fallen body was at once moved to a spot lower down the hill and laid on the pebbles. General Johnston came in haste, and kneeling beside his dead comrade in arms, took one of his hands in both of his, exclaiming with deep emotion: "I would rather anything than this!" Hardee approached, tears streaming down his bronze

cheeks, and knelt by the dead, crying: "My dear, dear friend!"

An ambulance was called, the body lifted to it and the officers present followed to camp; the general commanding riding next, with hat off, all the way.

So, almost at the same moment, the commander of each great army was exposed to deadly peril. It is certain that the immunity of one or both was necessary to the prolongation of the campaign upon the highest plane of war. So complete was the interpretation of each other's signals by the respective armies that President Lincoln received intelligence of the fall of Polk as early as did President Davis.

Major-General W W Loring took command of Polk's corps. General Johnston recommended him for promotion to the vacancy, but in a few weeks the hero of New Hope Church, Alexander P Stewart, received the preferment and right nobly bore it.

Wheeler's cavalry was now approximately 9000, with Jackson's division, though Jackson was never required to report to him, as we have seen. Wheeler, nevertheless, was the appointed chief of cavalry of the army. He was, in fact, the eyes and ears of the army. His efficiency in that capacity accounted for the safe carrying out of the commanding general's plans. He had never aspired to his present elevation, but had accepted with reluctance and great modesty. He was a better man for the place than Forrest or John Hunt Morgan. Tireless activity, dazzling courage, exalted personal character, unvarying obedience to orders, conspired to attach his men to him with enthusiasm and to inspire his superiors in rank with utmost trust in him.

General Wheeler's efficiency was, of course, dependent in large measure upon the intelligence and fidelity of his scouts. Among his favorite supporters in that perilous service was a beardless youth, mild-mannered as a maiden, a soldier who had never an hour's experience in the field before his enlistment in the 51st Alabama cavalry, Colonel John Tyler Morgan, H. Clay Reynolds.

It is not of record that Sherman's scouts were signally

enterprising. The names of a considerable number of those comprising Wheeler's scout and its organization are here written in honor:

J. M. Shannon of Texas, captain and chief (a tall, handsome man in middle life); Henry Clay Reynolds, of Alabama, lieutenant; Jack Clark, John Green, A. F. Hardie, Eugene Du Bose, James H. Robinson, Edward S. Kennedy, Nim Long, Carter Cleveland, B. Swaine, Bob Alsop, Hen Heath, B. F. Glass, Dave Spencer. At least twenty more men were detailed, but the records are lost and their names unfortunately cannot be recalled.

The following reminiscences were written by Lieutenant Reynolds for use here:

"SCOUTING.

"We were not long in finding our way back to the front, after the disaster of Missionary Ridge. I was continually operating in the rear of the enemy. It was my duty to find out what reinforcements came to him and what supplies. To do this, I must capture many prisoners for their information.

"The incidents of the service were often amusing as well as important and perilous to us. On one occasion we had had a considerable skirmish. We were sitting on our horses within about one hundred yards of a cross-roads. We heard the gallop of a horse on the hard road in front of a residence. Suddenly the trooper dashed around the corner in full view, in blue. He did not see us until he got right upon us, and actually rode between Jim Robinson and myself, brushing each man's knee as he passed. We sat still, wondering what next! This man, now on his way back, had evidently been on a foraging expedition with great success, having a string of chickens on each side in front, a big turkey on each side back of the saddle, a bag of onions and also a sack of potatoes. All my boys gathered around and laughed heartily at the sight.

"I said: 'My friend, you must belong to the foraging department?' He made no reply, but appeared the worst-

teased man I ever saw. I told the men in the rear guard not to let him lose his booty. It being late in the evening, I soon had him and the other prisoners going around the enemy's left wing, arriving safe at General Martin's camp. The next morning, just as the general came out from his tent, my men rode up with the prisoners. They called the general's attention to the forages the prisoner had and he was greatly amused. The boys told me on their return that the general smelled of the onions and of the potatoes, looked at the two big gobblers and the two strings of chickens, and then said to the Yankee, after asking what part of the country he was from, 'I want you to join my command as forage master.' After joking him, he had the cook unload the horse, declaring that the fellow was certainly a treasure.

"Just here I want to say something in relation to the battle of Chickamauga. It was the most desperate battle that I ever witnessed or took part in. The losses on both sides were terrible. But it seemed to me that the federal loss must have exceeded ours very greatly. I remember that I rode over the portion of the field in front of the left of our army where stood a good-sized double log house. Behind this the federals had made an obstinate stand, and when they did retreat they were shot down by the scores. It seemed to me that I could have walked, stepping from one dead body to another, for a quarter of a mile. It had been very dry and this section of the country, as it seemed, had not been burnt over; after these men had fallen, the woods caught on fire and all the dead and those badly wounded had their entire clothing burned off. And they were fearful sights! Their hair had been burned off and under the hot sun they had turned perfectly black. It was probably two or three days after the fight that I saw them. As I looked at these dead men, who had fallen in retreat, I learned one lesson, and it was that more men are killed in a retreat than in an advance. One reason of it is, that it is almost impossible to keep men of both sides from overshooting and they literally tear the tops of the trees to pieces, seeming to think that a great noise is all that is needed. But as soon as one side or the other turns to run,

then every man appears to be relieved and will draw a bead, as though he were shooting a deer.

"On one occasion I went from the enemy's rear round to our front, in order to get mail and a change of clothing, as I had a negro boy who remained with the company caring for my extra horse and baggage. Colonel Kirkpatrick, learning that I was with the company, and knowing my experience as a scout, sent for me and begged me to take a scout out on our front the next morning. As the command had just moved to this point, covering a road that ran from Big Shanty towards Marietta, I consented, taking a half dozen men with me. Learning from our pickets as we passed that they had heard nothing of the enemy, I instructed my men to be very careful and not to draw their pistols or make any motion that would attract the attention of the enemy's pickets should we come upon them; as we were dressed in Yankee overcoats, in the dim light of the morning we might capture them without firing a gun. After riding a considerable distance, we discovered two men on picket immediately ahead of us. Not paying any attention to them, apparently, we continued toward them, talking meanwhile in an ordinary tone among ourselves, but really watching them closely, ready to dash on them should we see the least movement of their guns. They carelessly, however, allowed us to ride right up to them, when two of my men rode immediately around them, having them as we called it 'boxed up.' Robinson and Glass rode up to take their arms after we had made them dismount. Glass's man delivered his gun without any trouble, but the one that Robinson approached first handed his gun to him then, seeming at once to realize what he had done, attempted to withdraw it. Robinson hung to it while the prisoner, having hold of the breech of the rifle, swung round and round, making desperate efforts to get the muzzle pointed upon Robinson's body, crying and swearing that he'd die before he'd surrender. Running my horse up to his side, I struck him with my pistol and finally punched the muzzle into his ear, telling him that I'd blow his brains out if he didn't desist. He finally turned loose and said that he would rather die than

be caught in any such trap. He swore that we were spies, wearing their uniform to deceive them. We told him that it didn't matter with us what he thought about it; our business was to lessen their number, by fair means or foul.

"After sending the prisoners back, we placed two men on the picket post to take the exact position these men had held, with their heads turned toward our camp, and told them that if any men came from the enemy's camp to pay little attention to them, while we would ride in their rear and cut them off. The two prisoners had informed us that they were expecting two men to come to their relief. We were not more than settled before we saw the relief, consisting of four men, coming. I rode out in the rear with my men, and as they reached the men on picket, I closed in upon them, coming from the direction of their camp. We deceived them completely and captured and sent them to our rear.

"In the meantime, leaving my two men on picket, we rode down some distance in the direction of the Yankee camp. Just about this time two men came running through the woods with long knives in their hands. I saw that they were after a hog which they had hung up to butcher. They made an effort to cut its throat, but the hog had escaped. They inquired of us which way it had gone. One of my men from the rear said, 'There it is,' and when they ran up they were surprised at being captured, while the razor-back went on his way with his throat half cut. We told them that it was a bad job, as the hog appeared to have been only half-butchered. We teased them considerably, telling them that any butcher would have known that the first thing to do was to knock the hog in the head, before cutting its throat.

"By this time there was a considerable skirmish over on our left. Suspecting that it was the advance of the left wing of the federal army, I concluded that I would go over and see. Leaving the two men on their post, we made quite a circuit through the woods, coming up in the rear of a cavalry regiment of the enemy. We attacked them, making all the noise we could and firing as rapidly as possible, which had the effect of making them fall back at full speed, whereupon

we captured a few more. Fearing we might be caught ourselves, we hastened back to our picket-post. I found our picket all right. As a lieutenant and several men had brought orders for us to return to camp immediately I withdrew the men who had been holding the picket-post so gallantly. As we were going back towards camp, I asked the lieutenant why it was that I had been ordered back. He said all the reason he could see was that we had sent in so many prisoners that General Allen and Colonel Kirkpatrick had become alarmed for fear that I would venture too far, and that my men and I would be captured. Just then I met General Allen, who informed me that he was in the act of moving with the whole command, as the enemy was flanking us and if we stood still they'd soon have us captured.

"Shortly after this we crossed Etowah river, when Wheeler's cavalry fought the enemy behind timber barricades. I had, as usual, been working in the rear of the federal army, getting information and capturing prisoners, and had come around to where our regiment was camped, our brigade at that time being under the command of John T. Morgan, now a brigadier-general.

"About nine o'clock one night I received a communication from General Morgan, asking me to come to his quarters as he wanted to see me on a matter of importance. I went immediately. After talking over affairs generally he asked me if I wouldn't make a scout for him that night. He handed me at the same time a communication just received from General Wheeler, ordering that a scout be sent out from each squadron on our right, to penetrate the enemy's lines, or by any other means ascertain where the infantry and cavalry joined their forces, as they had marched out toward our breastworks for several days past. I had come into our camps with the view of getting rest, much needed, and I objected very strongly to undertaking what I knew would be a whole night's work, and a very difficult task. But he begged and pleaded with me, saying that on account of my experience I would have more chance to succeed than almost any one else. I told him that this information could not be procured except by going within the



EUGENE DU BOSE (SCOUT), PRIVATE, CO. I, 31ST ALA. CAV.

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enemy's lines, and that he knew the consequences should I and my men be detected and caught. He then remarked that he had been informed that it was General Johnston's intention, provided this information could be obtained, to form a column of infantry between the enemy's cavalry and infantry, turning their left flank, and by that means enfilade their lines. He added that it would give us a very great advantage and in all probability save a great many lives on our side. The general again appealed to me to go. 'Well, general, I'll go,' I said; 'you know, general, that I have a wife and baby and an aged father and mother, and if I am not back by sunrise in the morning, you must promise me that you'll telegraph them that I died doing my duty. I cannot afford to die as a spy, and will never surrender.' All of which he promised to do.

"Leaving him, I went immediately to our regiment and woke up Carter Cleveland, Eugene Du Bose and Vanderslice. We then went out by our picket line. I discovered the line was almost like a line of battle, so I concluded that the enemy's pickets would be on the same plan, much like a skirmish line. I asked the men on duty if they had heard anything of the enemy that evening. They said, 'Oh, yes, they are right out there in front of you, but we have not seen them.' Although it was a very bright moonlight night, I expected to be at work every moment, after leaving. I had taken the precaution to instruct my men how to act. Cleveland should follow me, doing just as I did,—that is, crawling from bush to bush,—just keeping me in sight; DuBose should follow Cleveland and Vanderslice DuBose. I gave my boots to Vanderslice, crawling in my stocking feet. After traveling this way considerably farther than I expected to find the enemy's lines, and not seeing or hearing anything of them, I called my men up, put boots on and, as Vanderslice seemed quite willing to go back, I told him to take a message to the captain on the picket line. I felt safer with the two men whom I knew so well. I had never had Vanderslice out before.

"We then proceeded as before and finally crawled up on top of a ridge, nearly a half-mile from our lines. Hiding

ourselves, we could plainly see the changing of the pickets, who stood upon a little road of bright sand. Watching them as they changed their pickets, all of which were cavalry, we crawled down to the road and stopped in a bunch of coffee weeds by the roadside. Side by side, we clasped each others hands, so as to look as much like an animal as possible. We ran across the road and hid ourselves among some bushes.

"The pickets rode up and down the line, having seen us, but at a loss to know what had become of us. After remaining here sufficiently long, we commenced our journey through their camps.

"The first troops we struck were some artillery. We walked quietly along just as though we were at home. Occasionally a soldier would pass by us with a bucket of water, or forage for horses. But as we did not notice them they seemed very unconcerned, never suspecting us. And we, on our part, saw big trouble should we attempt to capture them, as we were on foot,

"We next found a wagon train, but seeing nothing to be gained by interfering with that, we determined to hunt the cavalry camps. After going two or three miles down the enemy's lines we found where the cavalry camp was located. Farther on, we found the infantry camp, and we became satisfied that this was the place where the infantry and cavalry joined.

"But this was not the end of our trouble; we did not know what road we were on, although it led directly through our lines, in the direction of Atlanta, nor could we say who lived on this road, so as to identify it. We discovered, however, that there was a large white house down near the enemy's lines. We went to this house, and fearing that there might be some federal soldiers in it, we knocked on the door a number of times. Finally a light appeared in the hallway and a woman inquired: 'Who is there?' We replied by asking if any of our soldiers were in the house, being satisfied that she, being inside the enemy's lines, would take it for granted that we meant federal soldiers. She at once replied: 'There are no soldiers here at all.'

"I told her then that we were Confederate soldiers. She

answered that she knew we were not, and that she would not open the door. She asked us to go away. I replied by asking her to come to the parlor window; that I would convince her that we were Confederate soldiers and meant no harm, but wanted some information. I pulled off my Yankee overcoat and she and two of her daughters came to the window. They were satisfied. I then told them our business. I inquired concerning the road, to whom the house belonged and asked for such other information as I needed. Just then one of the girls spoke up and said that she thought that she could tell us what we wanted to know about the joining of the lines of the infantry and cavalry. She said that they marched up to this point every morning and at a gin-house, just down the road, three of their men on horses dismounted, and that one man led the four horses back. The men who marched down there on foot, she supposed, were the infantry; and right there at the gin-house was the place, as she thought, where the lines joined.

"This information tallied exactly with the situation of the camps, and I cautioned both of my men, if either one escaped to our lines, to be sure to carry the information immediately to headquarters.

"We then resolved to return immediately to the place where we had entered the lines and try to get out in the manner in which we had gotten in. So, moving along, just keeping one another in sight, just as day was breaking we found ourselves back at our crossing-place. Here we were destined to have a bit of excitement. Just before we all stooped down to run across the road, I told my men that I thought we would make a mistake to try to run across an open place of considerable width, but that we had better keep right together as there were only two men on the picket-post there and it was not likely that more than one of them on the posts next to us would leave it to attack us. We could easily whip them off. But if we separated, they would have the advantage. So I thought that we had better keep together and lie down in that bunch of coffee weeds, then make a second run to the top of the hill. They either misunderstood me or lost sight of what I had said in their

excitement, for when we had run across the road, in place of dropping down, where I did, in the thick weeds, they ran on up the side of the hill, stopping behind a large tree. Just then I heard a horse coming up the road in my direction, and I knew that we had been discovered. I quietly moved myself round so as to put my head toward the road, drew one of my pistols, putting it out in front of me. I watched the picket as he rode up, right to the place where we had crossed the road, seeming to be looking for our tracks, then turned his horse and rode exactly toward where I was lying. I lay perfectly still, but watched him closely, and when he had ridden up within a few feet of me and was looking beyond where I was lying, I made a desperate spring and caught his horse by the bridle. My right hand brought my pistol directly in front of him and I said: 'Surrender or I'll kill you!' The fellow was so horror-stricken and dazed that he could make no reply. He merely handed me his two pistols and carbine, which I hung on the horn of his saddle after having made him dismount.

"Meantime, I heard another picket coming from another direction. I called to Cleveland and DuBose: 'Look out! There comes another!' Cleveland dashed down by the side of the road and captured the second man, took his arms and dismounted him, and, mounting the federal's horse, drove the prisoner up ahead of him in the direction we were going, toward our camps. Meantime the man that I had captured, seeing that my attention was called off in another direction, dashed under the horse that he had ridden and whose bridle I now held, and started to run in the direction of his post. I called to DuBose: 'Look out! My prisoner has escaped!' DuBose, being a wonderful runner, made a few jumps down the hill and, coming up with the fellow, knocked him down with his rifle. By this time the whole camp, up and down the road, was in an uproar. Several of the picket force could see us, and they all fired upon us. Meantime, I mounted my horse and rode up to Eugene and the prisoner, who by this time had straightened up, and giving DuBose my hand, swung him up behind me. I started my prisoner up the hill on a run, doing my best to catch up with Cleve-

land, who with his prisoner had turned the top of the ridge. By this time the whole of the reserve picket was on our trail, shooting as rapidly as they could get a glimpse of us. I told my prisoner to run, as I would kill him before I'd leave him. The balls tore the earth up around us and the prisoner, with a look of distress on his face, declared that this was the tightest place that he had ever gotten into!

"DuBose laughed very heartily and said: 'You never belonged to the rebel army.' Then, taking the prisoner's carbine, he managed to shoot back occasionally at our pursuers. They continued to follow us, but our line of pickets, realizing that we needed help, rapidly rushed to our relief. And we were glad to be, once more, inside of our own lines.

"We were warmly congratulated, as we were informed that none of the other scouts had gotten any information.

"We went at once to General Morgan's headquarters. He was delighted to see us and begged us to go immediately to General Wheeler's headquarters, some three miles down the line. So DuBose and I took the prisoners up behind us on our horses and rode at full speed down the line, where our men had fortified. Wheeler's adjutant, with note-book in hand, insisted on taking down our report. I told him, no, that we would report in person to General Wheeler and to no one else. So about sunrise we were ushered into the bedroom where the general was. We made our report and were highly complimented. We then turned our prisoners over to the provost guard and walked out to the gate to mount our horses, when we found that they were gone. Upon inquiry we were told that Adjutant Burford had taken them as government stock. I immediately informed General Wheeler of what had occurred, and he ordered the adjutant to bring them back at once. And so ended this scout.

"Following this information, early that same morning the general ran a column of infantry through to this point where the enemy's cavalry and infantry joined, and, turning their left flank, enfiladed their position and drove them down in the rear of their breastworks with great slaughter."

General Wheeler substituted tact in dealing with troops,

to effect discipline, for the usual primitive practices. His personal knowledge of his men, the names and the homes and the home environment of each, was wonderful. Years after the war mention was made in a social gathering of a certain gentleman of influential connections, who had served as an inconspicuous private in one of his Alabama regiments. "Yes, I remember E—— from Wilcox county." "No, general, E—— was from Dallas county." "Ah, yes, I know now—from Dallas." Absolutely free from fear, war was the element in which the man delighted. The hardships entertained him; the perils seemed to be of no consideration. In the thirty days' fighting between New Hope and Kenesaw, Brigadier-General Harrison sent division commissary, Major W. H. Ross, a merchant of Mobile, to Wheeler to know whether the enemy had a masked battery in the valley through which he proposed to march upon their position on the opposite hill. Wheeler did not know of such a battery. "But, major," he said, "ride with me and we will soon find out." Passing a guidon on the way, Wheeler seized it and planted it in the middle of the road. Instantly the ground about was plowed by shot from the masked battery. "Yes, major, there is a battery in the valley," cried Wheeler, laughing as he spoke. He told Ross the first fire of artillery seldom had the range and was not dangerous. Major Ross reported to General Harrison, but assured his superior that General Wheeler's methods of demonstration were extremely inconsiderate of other people!

The cavalry were marching parallel with the railroad and the track here was on an embankment. Colonel Kirkpatrick halted the 51st Alabama, stretched along this embankment, at the base. General Wheeler sat his horse on the track. In his soft, quick voice he spoke: "Colonel, you had better move off a little. I see the Yankees have placed a section of a battery up the road and are about to open on you." Hardly had the regiment moved from its position before the enemy opened and General Wheeler had barely ridden down the embankment before shells swept it.

Such evidences of consideration for his men and of ap-

parent utter fearlessness on his part had the natural effect of greatly endearing the chief to his cavalry. A sergeant had been sent to burn a bridge. After the inflammables were piled on the floor, General Wheeler rode up and passed over to the enemy's side, all alone. On the streets of the village, hard by, he saw half a dozen or more bluecoats wandering around. Addressing the sergeant, the general said: "Let's charge them!" "No, general, I was sent here to burn this bridge and you must ride back to your own side."

Strong drink never touched his lips; no harsh words, no profanity ever escaped them. After an all-day fight, his staff would find him writing in the small hours letters of condolence to parents bereaved or wife widowed by the casualties, people he had never seen. His troops averred he had but one fad; he would ride ten miles to sleep in a white house.

Amidst the fifty miles of labyrinthine breastworks General Wheeler prepared the following notable address:

"HEADQUARTERS CAVALRY CORPS,
"June 18, 1864.

"General Orders

"No. 6.

"Soldiers of the Cavalry Corps:

"I. For two months you have been constantly under the fire of and engaging a powerful foe. In every movement of our army you have been between it and the enemy, hurling back his exulting advance and holding him in check until our entire army had quietly prepared to receive and repulse his gigantic assaults. Every attempt to turn our flanks or strike our communications has been baffled by your promptness, activity and valor. You have labored both night and day, without a murmur; you have built fortifications and held long lines of works when attacked by the enemy's infantry, even ten times your number

"II. First. It is impossible in one order to enumerate all your brilliant achievements; a few may be mentioned:

"Second. At New Hope [Pickett's Settlement], May

27th, a portion of Humes' and Kelly's commands repulsed with immense slaughter a most desperate attempt on the part of the enemy, twenty times their strength, to gain our rear and held him at bay until reinforced by our infantry line. This service was most signal and was alone due to your valor.

"Third. The gallant repulse of an entire division of the enemy, on Taylor's Ridge, by Grigsby's Kentucky brigade, numbering less than 400 men, reflects the highest credit upon every member of his command.

"III. Two months ago the enemy brought a defiant and overwhelming cavalry force against you; you met and defeated and routed his superior numbers in many engagements.

"IV. First. At Varnell's Station, less than 1000 men from Allen's and Dibrell's brigades of Kelly's division, and the Texan Rangers of Harrison's brigade, Hume's division, met and repulsed the attack of a force of cavalry 5000 strong. At this juncture, the gallant Texas Rangers (Colonel Cook) and the 8th Confederate regiment (Colonel Prather) charged most heroically into the enemy's ranks, killing and wounding large numbers and capturing over 100 prisoners, including a brigade commander and several other officers. One stand of colors was captured and the enemy completely routed and defeated. Here, covered with glory, the gallant McElderry fell.

"Second. At Rockyface May 12th Dibrell's and Allen's brigades of Kelly's division, a portion of Humes' division and Hannon's brigade attacked Major-General Stoneman's cavalry corps, capturing a number of prisoners and so defeating and stampeding the enemy as to cause him to destroy, as we afterwards learned, all his stores near Tunnel Hill and burn a large train of wagons to prevent their falling into our hands.

"Third. At Cass Station, having been ordered to make a reconnoissance in the enemy's rear, a portion of Allen's brigade of Kelly's division, under Colonel Goode, and General Wheeler's escort being in advance, they charged and defeated the enemy, capturing a large and valuable wagon

train and a number of prisoners. Eighty loaded wagons were brought off and the remainder burned. The enemy, in their flight, also burned a number of wagons and all their stores at Cass Station. In returning with the trains, a large fresh force of the enemy's cavalry attempted by an overwhelming charge to recapture the train. The gallant Texas Rangers and 2d Tennessee regiment, supported by the 3d Arkansas, were promptly placed into position, met and repulsed the enemy's charge; then in turn charged the enemy, driving him upon his infantry support and capturing near 100 prisoners. This affair was one of marked brilliancy.

"Fourth. The 3d Alabama regiment, Colonel Mauldin, having been detached, dashed into Calhoun, defeated the enemy and captured and destroyed a large, heavily laden train of cars. A detachment also destroyed another large train, a short distance north of the town.

"Fifth. Besides the wagon train and stores and animals captured at Cass Station, you have captured over 800 prisoners, 4 stands of colors, 900 horses, and on several occasions small detachments have torn up the railroad in the enemy's rear.

"Sixth. Your great commander, General Johnston, fully appreciates the valuable services you have rendered and relies with confidence upon you to maintain the high reputation your noble conduct has won and to accomplish whatever task he may call on you to undertake.

"JOSEPH WHEELER,
"Major General."

The address is historic. It stands alone, giving the record of cavalry protecting the rear of a moving army, in daily close contact with a foe double its strength. It stands alone in testimony of the cavalry service in the campaign. The official records contain no account from the enemy of corresponding energy in his cavalry. General Johnston lost nothing from Dalton to Atlanta, captured or destroyed by Sherman's cavalry. Sherman's cavalry never left the infantry protection to ravage the country farther than ten or fifteen miles on either side of the railroad.

Wheeler's fight at McAfee's farm on June 19th and at Noonday Creek the 20th were brilliant affairs. In the latter he reached the rear of the enemy with three of his brigades, charged and drove them, capturing 120 prisoners, 150 horses and 2 stands of colors. Here again General Johnston specially complimented him and his men.

The addresses of Wheeler to his troops and the frequent formal acknowledgments made by General Johnston of their efficient performances, indicate the tone of the army and the extraordinary character of the campaign. In 1866, at a dinner at Selma, Alabama, in his honor, General Hardee being a guest, in reply to a direct interrogatory touching the military character of General Wheeler, as he knew it, General Johnston answered in his accustomed precise form: "I could not have commanded the Army of Tennessee without General Wheeler." Hardee spoke, saying that for a great part of the Dalton-Atlanta campaign Wheeler had reported directly to him, and he fully concurred in General Johnston's estimate of the great cavalry commander.

From their breastworks on top of Kenesaw, the bright Monday morning, June 27th, that part of the Confederate army stationed there beheld a wonderful scene in the green valley below. One hundred thousand men, with glistening bayonets, were forming in line of battle with the vigor and precision of a mighty machine. Officers of all grades dashed here and there; infantry, in quickstep, fell into line; artillery galloped to positions. Many bands playing martial music filled the air with the spirit of war. High up on a spur of the mountain, the trees felled all around to clear the view, stood General Sherman, surrounded by his signal corps. He had heard his army was tired of everlasting flanking, with no great fight; he resolved to give them proof of his grit.

The Confederate army was aligned in this manner: Hood on the extreme right; Loring, successor to Polk, in the center, occupying the crest; Hardee on the extreme left, occupying level ground. Hardee's two historic divisions, Cheatham's and Cleburne's, were now to win fresh laurels,

the most remarkable laurels. Cleburne was the center of Hardee's line, with Cheatham next, on his right. Entrenchments were strong in front of both, and these were covered by rifle-pits surmounted by head logs.³⁹ Sherman's three armies were arranged as follows: Schofield was in front of Hood; in front of Loring was the brilliant young Ohioan, McPherson; in front of Hardee was the "Rock of Chickamauga," Thomas. Johnston was to receive the assault of the whole line, ten miles long, after furious cannonading all along.

General Sherman prepared with utmost deliberation. Three days before the date fixed upon, he issued the order of battle to the respective commanders of his three armies. The general scheme was that each commander should concentrate upon a point on Johnston's line, to be selected by himself, and break through. Each commander was allowed three days, from June 24th, the date of the order, until June 27th, to ascertain by forced reconnoissance where the point of his attack should be. Precisely at eight o'clock on the morning of the 27th, the whole line, ten miles long, should rush forward upon the Confederates to confuse them, while the maneuver of concentration, prearranged, should be duly executed.

"The roar was as constant as Niagara and sharp as the crash of thunder with the lightning still in the eye. Through the rifts of smoke, as it was wafted aside by the wind, we could see the assault made upon Cheatham. There the struggle was hard and there it lasted longest."⁴⁰

The prearranged assaults were, by McPherson upon Hardee, Cheatham's division the chosen point of concentration, and by Thomas upon Loring's corps, French's division the chosen point of concentration.

Seven lines deep, right up to the muzzles of the Confederate guns McPherson hurled his reckless western farmers. To storm the works was impossible, yet that was the thing to do, else do nothing. Again and again the invaders ad-

³⁹Cleburne and His Command, 259

⁴⁰French's Diary.

vanced their lines, while the defenders coolly awaited in almost perfect immunity.

At eleven-forty-five General Sherman informed Schofield that Thomas and McPherson had failed; at twelve noon he notified Thomas that Schofield had failed. But night was yet afar off; the battle must proceed. "It is easier now than it will be hereafter," he assured his great lieutenant.

The strife raged all day. The cannon belched flame and shot till after dark. It was not the mountainside only that gave the victory to Johnston. The heaviest battle was between Hardee and Thomas on the level.

While the concentration of McPherson was upon French's division of Loring's (Polk's) corps, Major-General Featherstone's division, of the same corps, received much of the brunt of battle; while Thomas' concentration was upon Cheatham, Cleburne received a full share of his effort. The burning gunpowder set the forest afire in front of Cleburne. The result must be death by burning of many hundreds of the wounded enemy lying there. An unofficial truce was proposed by Lieutenant-Colonel W. H. Martin, commanding the 1st Arkansas regiment. He hung out the white flag until he could be understood. "Remove your wounded," he shouted; "we won't fire a shot." Firing instantly ceased, while Confederates leaped the breastworks and bluecoats laid down their arms, all joining in the labor of love, lifting the disabled invaders to a place of safety. The major who had consented to Martin's suggestion remained among his men while the removal proceeded, and Martin was also on the spot. In deep emotion, this commander of the foe walked up to the Confederate, took his hand warmly, loosed his belt, with a brace of the finest ivory-handle revolvers attached, and begged Martin to accept the gift as a memorial of his mercy shown to the helpless brave.

General Wheeler's cavalry, dismounted, fought behind hastily built works on the extreme left of the Confederate line—Hardee's left—on level land. Several of his men were killed near his headquarters.

The battle was general. One month before, General Johnston, as we have seen, expected Sherman to precipitate

a general engagement and prepared for it in the heavily wooded land about New Hope Church. Sherman was not ready. The next day the Confederate commander ordered all lieutenant-generals to precipitate a general engagement, but one of the number, Hood, discovered the enemy had, meantime, so changed the conditions of the field as to make such a movement indiscreet and undesirable, and it was authoritatively recalled. No result at that time possible to the Confederates could have been of value equal to the deferred battle of Kenesaw. No battle could have been more general than Kenesaw.

The Confederate loss was insignificant. General Johnston reported Sherman's loss at not less than 10,000. Cleburne lost 11 only, but killed and wounded 1000, by Hardee's estimate. Cheatham's loss was 195; French's, 186; all others, 141, making a total Confederate loss by the battle of 552.

General Sherman was very sore. On Thursday following the bloody Monday he wrote to his wife: "It is enough to make the whole world start at the awful amount of death and destruction that now stalks abroad. Daily (here) for the past two months has the work progressed, and I see no signs of a remission until one or both or all the armies are destroyed, when, I suppose, the balance of the people will tear each other up, as Grant says, reënacting the story of the Kilkenny cats.

I have no idea of besieging Atlanta, but may (?) cross the Chattahooche and circle around Atlanta, breaking up its roads."⁴¹

This is a pivotal confession of failure; a most invaluable contribution, unconsciously offered, to the history of the Confederacy. For more than one hundred miles, and for two months' daily fighting,—fighting that had not ceased day or night,—General Sherman was now no nearer his "objective, Joe Johnston," than he was at the outset. He started out believing he should capture Atlanta. Now, in sight of the spires of the churches there, he had "no idea" even of attempting it.

It is entirely plain that General Sherman now realized

⁴¹Sherman's Home Letters, 299, 300.

that 100,000 of his troops could not afford to assault Johnston's works, on hill or in dale, manned by 50,000. That discovery made, he realized that the volume of troops opposing Johnston need not be increased with expectation of a different result. Johnston had strength enough to prevent Sherman from victory. Without victory for Sherman, Lincoln would be defeated at the November elections and the cause of Lincoln would fall.

That was a military conclusion, arrived at by all intelligent persons, north and south, following the battle of Kenesaw Mountain. Ah, there was a single exception to this otherwise universal knowledge of the situation. The government at Richmond did not know it. The limits of free government, defined by the thing written, "thus saith the law," stand subject, inexorably, to the administrators, of small intellects and bad principles.

Before the battle of Kenesaw Mountain Sherman said he was forced to make the effort to preserve the morale of his army. After that battle he wrote: "These fellows fight like devils and Indians combined, and it calls for all my cunning and strength. Instead of attacking the forts, which really are unassailable, I must gradually destroy the roads which make Atlanta a place worth having." We must study this great commander's problem as he saw it. He had discovered his inability to capture Johnston by maneuver in the open; he had failed to defeat him by assault upon his positions. We have it that Johnston's army in all the campaign had never complained of want of rations—"never missed a meal." Sherman, summing up his difficulties, wrote at the close: "The task of feeding this vast host is a more difficult one than to fight."

General Sherman carried into his task a lively sense of the masterful genius of Johnston. A day or two after Kenesaw Mountain, Schofield formally presented to him an hypothesis of the conduct of the Confederate commander; he would collect two or three weeks supplies at Marietta and there fortify, so that when Sherman swung around him to cross the Chattahooche he would be in the rear of the invader. Sherman thanked his lieutenant for the suggestion,

but thought Johnston too much of a general to be caught in such a trap. Johnston would never let Sherman get out of reach of his front.

Sherman was baffled. His campaign was lost.

It is worthy of note how the two great Virginian commanders applied, as if by preconcerted plan, the science of active war upon widely separated fields. At the outset, however, Johnston possessed a strategical situation far more practical than Lee. Grant had two bases, one on the Potomac and the other on the James. Lee was stationed between the two, and in ordinary course of events he must fight his battles between the two, and, in fact, he fell back from one to the other.

Sherman, on the other hand, in combating Johnston must fight away from his base, in Ohio, straight towards Johnston's, at Atlanta. Lee's base was hundreds of miles away, in Georgia and Alabama, while Grant's, for which he was marching, was at City Point, not exceeding two days' march of the Confederate capital and only ten miles from Lee's headquarters at Petersburg by rail. Grant, at City Point, had easy and unassailable communication with all parts of the United States and Europe.

The Army of Tennessee was a little more than half the numbers of the Army of Northern Virginia, the one at Dalton and the other at the Wilderness, May 4th, 1864. The Army of Tennessee was less than half Sherman's army, confronting it at Dalton, and the Army of Northern Virginia was less than half Grant's, confronting it at the Wilderness.

The general campaign opens. Lee permits Grant to cross the Rappahannock, at two fords, between his army and Fredericksburg, unopposed. The crossing began at three o'clock in the morning, May 3d. All the host was over by May 4th. Grant expected to find Lee sheltered behind field works, nearer Richmond. On the contrary, he discovered the bold Confederate immediately on his right

flank, with a shell of an army, ready to give battle. All day the 5th the battle raged in the Wilderness. Longstreet had been slower than his orders required in moving to rejoin, from east Tennessee. General Lee, with hopes of hastening the march, had sent a staff officer up the road to guide him on the most expeditious line of approach. He dismissed the guide, lost his way and had to turn back to find it. All this time Anderson's fine division was away also. At night Grant and Lee slept on the ground they had fought over. Longstreet started about midnight of the 5th for that ground. At sunrise, on the 6th, Lee sat on "Traveller" on the roadside, evidently terribly in earnest. The head of Longstreet's column came up and passed in fine spirits. At length Lee called: "What troops are these?" "Law's Alabama brigade." "God bless the Alabamians," spoke the commander, in bold tone. Troops shouted and hastened on, amidst a shower of Grant's bullets.

At eleven o'clock in the morning Longstreet, the youthful Major-General Micah Jenkins and some of the staff rode ahead of the line into the dark jungle to see how to pursue the routed foe to best advantage. They turned, riding back. Jenkins remarked: "I had despaired of our cause but this day saves it; we shall have another Bull Run." Instantly he fell, shot to death by his own men, sixty yards in the thicket, mistaken for the enemy. At the same moment a staff officer caught the falling Longstreet in his arms, the victim of a shot from the same source, through the neck. Just then General John B. Gordon rode up to his old regiment, exclaiming: "Sixth Alabama, I am glad to see you—this day we win the Confederacy." Gordon had come from the extreme left of Lee's line. There he had, by crawling on his hands and knees through the bushes, found Grant's right wholly unprotected and unemployed, the soldiers resting and entirely unconscious of danger. Gordon's brigade and the brigade of General Robert D. Johnston were there. Gordon implored his corps commander, General Ewell, and his division commander, General Early, to permit him to drive the enemy by an attack on the rear, but in vain. Longstreet insists that,

had he been left in command, Hancock's routed troops on Lee's right would have broken Grant's entire line and forced it across the Rappahannock in rout; Gordon insists that, had he been permitted to gain the rear of Grant's right with Johnston's North Carolinians, Grant's entire line would have crumbled and fled, pell-mell. General Lee's daring was therefore the correct tactics.

Grant was satisfied he could not handle his army in the Wilderness. He had smoked twenty cigars on the 6th.⁴²

The invader rested on the 7th. That night he flanked Lee, marching eighteen miles to Spottsylvania Court House. Lee, on the lookout for that movement, hurried off Anderson, now commanding the disabled Longstreet's corps, and barely reached the works, all ready for him, in time to meet the buoyant foe.

Grant assaulted the fortified lines at once, twice on the 8th, five times on the 10th. At the first ray of light, on the 12th, Hancock, in ranks several men deep, assailed and captured General Edward Johnson's division, more than 3000 men and twenty pieces of artillery. Gordon recaptured the lost position, assisted by Rodes and others. The fighting was all day, hand to hand, and desperate as never seen on this continent before. General Lee rode forward with intent to lead his advancing troops, but Gordon and the common soldiers seized his reins and insisted that their officers in immediate command should have their rights. The "bloody angle" of Spottsylvania remains an everlasting testimony to the glory of the men who recaptured it.

On May 18th and 19th General Grant assailed Lee with utmost fury. He now ceased and on the 20th withdrew at night, leaving Lee in possession of the field.

Grant sent Sheridan with 10,000 splendidly equipped cavalry to march to the rear of Lee and capture Richmond. Stuart encountered him, with two brigades, at Yellow Tavern, near the Confederate capital, fought him desperately all day and thus gave time to General Bragg to collect forces to man the fortifications about the city. Sheri-

⁴²Recollections of General Gordon.

dan passed by, or over, Stuart, carried the weaker outer works, but failing in the attempt to reach the city, turned back by a circuitous route to the east. He had killed in battle the great commander of Lee's cavalry.

Lee made a short cut to head off Grant and took position on the South Anna river. He so maneuvered as to wedge himself there, between the wings of the invading host, and fully intended to force him to a general engagement; but, to his sorrow and mortification, he became ill and incapacitated for duty until the time had passed.

Lee's campaign was now rapidly closing forever. He took his last position before pausing to stand siege, with the one possible issue, the destruction of his renowned army.

Engineers had thrown up breastworks for the protection of the Army of Northern Virginia at Cold Harbor. Behind these a halt was made, and there Grant would be welcomed to a hospitable grave. Law's brigade was assigned to a section of these works on the edge of a pine thicket, the thicket in front. At once seeing the fault in the location, Law resolved to rectify the line without delay and on his own responsibility. It was now early night and not a moment to lose. The brigadier ordered skirmishers thrown out and other exposures to create the belief that he had occupied the original work. Silently he led his men back to the other side of the open field and there, without entrenching tools, he used bayonets and tin cups to throw up earth to protect his men. The work was hardly completed when dawn came. The advantage of the new position was that the enemy must advance upon it through the open, rather than through a forest so thick the trees would catch the bullets intended for the foe.

Not all of Law's men had had time to seize their stacked arms behind the new works when the enemy, cheering lustily, rushed through the pine thicket and leaped upon the original works, the skirmishers and videttes left there, to a purpose, fleeing before them. They at once discovered the ruse and in deep ranks rushed upon the new line and to horrible slaughter. Again and again they charged, all in vain.⁴³

⁴³Captain W. C. Ward's Narrative.

(1) We have now shown that Johnston's ineffectual challenge to Sherman to fight, at Dalton, was the counterpart of Lee's challenge to Grant, accepted, to fight at the Wilderness. The variation in the operations of the two Confederate armies, thus far, represented the respective minds of Grant and Sherman.

(2) Grant flanked Lee to Spottsylvania and Sherman flanked Johnston to Resaca, all in the same week. Sherman did not attack Johnston behind fortifications as Grant attacked Lee behind fortifications, and therefore the fighting by Lee was far heavier than by Johnston.

(3) Grant flanked Lee to the South Anna and Sherman flanked Johnston to New Hope Church, both movements within five days of each other. Grant did not offer battle at South Anna; Sherman forced battle at New Hope and Pickett's Settlement and was badly defeated at both.

(4) There was no equivalent in the operations of the Army of Northern Virginia, in this campaign, to the parallel thirty days' fighting of Johnston and Sherman, between the New Hope Church fight, May 25th, and Kenesaw Mountain.

(5) While Grant engaged Lee most desperately at Spottsylvania Court House, he dispatched Sheridan, with his cavalry, to the Confederate rear, specially charged to capture Richmond. Stuart pursued and Sheridan failed. Five days later, Sherman pressing Johnston with all his might, dispatched Stoneman and Garrard with his cavalry to break the railroad in the rear of the Confederates. Wheeler overtook this expedition and drove it back. Thus the cavalry arm in a juncture of great peril to each army made it secure.

(6) June 3d Lee closed a succession of disappointments he inflicted on Grant, in a campaign of thirty days covering eighty miles of marching, by the remarkable victory of Cold Harbor. Twenty-four days later, Johnston closed to Sherman his still more protracted campaign by the equally pronounced victory of Kenesaw Mountain. Grant's signal of battle sounded at dawn. The day was yet young when Major-General Hancock neglected the third order, in quick

succession, from his superior, Meade, to send his corps to another assault; when Major-General Smith openly refused to respect the same order. The day was not more than half-spent when General Grant ordered that no further assault should be made, but that approaches by trenching tools should be the *dernier ressort*.

The operating coincidences of the two Confederate armies, separated by hundreds of miles, without a common head, were so remarkable in effect and so satisfactory that they must be allowed to have transpired under the highest development of the art of war.

Grant nor Sherman could achieve more in the future than he had already done; Lee and Johnston could continue to do, each as he had done. It was enough for the Confederacy; too little appeared done for the cause of the invader.

The unpaid, half-clothed, half-fed Confederate volunteer armies were cheerful, indomitable, invincible. The people of the United States were tired of the war, resentful of the draft, doubtful of the future.

The civil authorities at Richmond intervened. The fruitful mastery of Lee was arbitrarily changed for the most posterous sacrifice ever forced upon an army. We have seen that Grant set out from one base, on the Potomac, for another on the James. The experiences of his progress were not favorable to him. Now that he was escaped the desperate chances which had beset his march and was securely established, invulnerable to attack, the government at Richmond halted Lee in his glorious career. The government halted Lee within a half-day's march of Grant's new base, there to remain behind improvised earthworks; there to be eliminated from the conditions of Confederate success; there to await, a plaything for Mr. Lincoln, until inevitable starvation, disease and daily slaughter might work final extermination.

One Cold Harbor meant succeeding Cold Harbors, away among the Blue Ridge or yet away on the plains of North Carolina. Every subsequent collision of Grant with Lee

on the latter's terms meant a Cold Harbor and meant the survival of the Confederacy over its former calamities.

When General Sidney Johnston reported for duty upon his arrival within the Confederacy to the president at Richmond, he remarked upon the indefensible position that had been chosen for the capital of the new nation. We have seen that when General Joseph Johnston was first chosen to defend the city he openly declared he would not sacrifice his army in the idle attempt.

Had Albert Sidney Johnston lived after Shiloh, had Joseph Johnston kept his saddle a day longer at Seven Pines, longer life for Stonewall Jackson at Chancellorsville—had these things happened that were lost to the Confederacy, great must have been its gain.

Lee, in the Wilderness campaign, and Johnston in the Dalton-Atlanta campaign, by mastery of the science of war overcame the preceding calamitous events and by their genius offered rescue to their cause that was ruthlessly renounced.

It is important and highly interesting to revive the testimony, cotemporary with the tragical history of the Army of Tennessee, to establish the fact of the decisive character of its operations at this time and until arrested by the civil government. Apprehension for its immunity from this source of peril possessed the mind of the army and the public. Senator Henry, from Tennessee, greatly impressed with the attitude of the government, wrote from his desk in the Senate Chamber the following letter, under date May 25th, 1864—the day of the battle of New Hope Church, the event then unknown to him:

"HON. MR. SEDDON, Sec. War:

"Now that the enemy are drawn far into Georgia, would it not be a great move to order Forrest, with his whole force, to fall in behind the enemy and cut off his trains of

supplies—make such a demonstration in his rear as will destroy his army?

“Your friend,

“G. A. HENRY ”

Governor Brown wrote to the president urging that Forrest, with 10,000 men, be placed on Sherman's line of communication. He said: “I regret the exhibition of temper, etc. (referring to the previous rebuke he had received for original advice, on same point) If you continue to keep our forces divided and our cavalry raiding and meeting raids

I fear the result will be similar to those from a like policy at Murfreesboro and Chattanooga.”

So intense was the excitement regarding the Army of Tennessee that, Congress having adjourned for the summer, a number of representatives and senators came to see for themselves. Among the number was Representative F. S. Lyon, of Alabama, long recognized as one of the wisest and most public spirited men of his state. Mr. Lyon was an ardent admirer of President Davis and was known as a “moderate” man in all public affairs. He left Richmond a pronounced administration man. He now remained with the army several days, the guest of relatives who were soldiers. His false impression was removed immediately. Returning home, he declared on all sides that there was no bickering in the army; the *esprit de corps* was perfect. He was invited to one of the many dinners given by the officers. He heard nothing but expressions of supreme, all pervading confidence. “The troops are well fed,” the soldiers told him, “and we get plenty for our horses.” An intelligent private, son of a cotton planter from Dallas county, Alabama, sent a message home. “Tell them,” said the youth, “we have been on the retreat for a long time, but we gain ground every day. We are going to whip in this fight, and you people in the rear may just as well know it. Our general is a great man. Every soldier in this army knows it. I have waked him at midnight. He will jump out of bed, in his drawers, just as ready to hear a report and send an order as if he were on his horse. Whenever the boys see

him riding along the lines they shout as long as he is in sight." Along with Mr. Lyon was a senator from Alabama, Richard W. Walker. As soon as this senator reached Montgomery he wrote a most serious letter to his lifelong friend, the assistant secretary of war, John A. Campbell, on the rumors which had reached him of the purpose of the administration to displace Johnston from command. The letter, in part, is as follows:

"MONTGOMERY, ALA., July 4, 1864.

" I found on my return from Richmond no indication whatever that the popular confidence in General Johnston had been at all shaken by his retreating policy. On the contrary, as far as I have been able to discover, the opinion is almost universal that the policy he has adopted was judicious and necessary. As to the army itself, confidence in Johnston seems unlimited."

The senator from Texas, Wigfall, came down from Richmond, called on Governor Brown, and the two went together out to the army. Johnston was found in fine spirits, just after Kenesaw. He told his distinguished visitors that nothing was needed to drive Sherman out of Georgia—perhaps nothing was needed to annihilate his army—but some cavalry under Forrest to operate upon the one lone line of rails that brought to him all that his men had to eat. He had for weeks been in telegraphic and mail correspondence with the government, and with General Stephen D. Lee, in Mississippi, endeavoring, but in vain, to impress upon them the paramount importance of this proposed employment of Forrest.

The senator and the governor united in message by courier to Senator Benjamin H. Hill, then at home at LaGrange, a short ride away. Hill was selected to act as go-between because of his well-known personal intimacy with the president.

The senator from Georgia responded promptly to the call made on him. General Johnston was communicative. Hill, he knew, was about to make direct representation to the

president of the things that the general of the army at Marietta considered essential to the success of the campaign at that particular juncture.

"If Johnston thought Sherman could be driven out of Georgia by 10,000 cavalymen under Forrest, operating on his line of railroad communications, could not that decisive work be done by a part of Johnston's army, under another commander, that could not be otherwise decisively employed?" was the senator's first interrogatory.

"No. To divert 10,000 men, especially with horses, from immediate contact with Sherman would work disaster to all the other parts of the army."

"When and where would General Johnston fight?"

No answer. Did general, facing a foe, ever answer!

"Did General Johnston realize that when he should allow Sherman to cross the Chattahooche he (Sherman) would be free to burn the railroad bridge at West Point, and then, a little lower down, burn the railroad bridge at Columbus, so that Atlanta, his base, would be cut off from the Alabama plantations?"

General Johnston had as yet, according to Mr. Hill, not taken up consideration of matters so remote in the future. If occupation of his then position depended on General Sherman's ability to assail it, he would be safe where he was. If Sherman's progress in flanking him should not improve on their recent common experience he would remain on the north side of the Chattahooche for fifty or sixty days.

Mr. Hill, at his leisure, went on to Richmond. He sought the president. His mission was explained, in manner and substance, as a shrewd lawyer would submit to a patronizing tribunal an unwelcome proposition that he well knew had already been decided against him. "How long do you say General Johnston promised you to hold the Kenesaw Mountain line?" Mr. Hill had received the impression from General Johnston that he had no thought of crossing the Chattahooche. The president took down a dispatch. General Johnston had crossed the Chattahooche the night before. The president was sarcastic and cynical. He gave the senator the name of one of his officers who would fight!

President Davis had been in too precarious health for many years to undergo the strain of his office—now felt. His constitution was undermined by the heat and malaria of the "Brierfield" island plantation, in the Mississippi. At least twice in his incumbency of his present office his life seemed to hang on a thread. Vice-President Stephens was thrown into embarrassing position by irresponsible threats of assassination if he should assume the presidency.⁴⁴

There was a suspicion over the land that the vice-president would send the troops home. Congress passed an act giving command of all the armies in the field to General Lee, imitating the act promoting Grant. Mr. Davis vetoed it.

Pressure from various sources prevailed to bring about a show of acquiescence by the civil authorities in General Johnston's ceaseless appeals for cavalry operations on Sherman's rear. It is noticeable with what spontaneity of suggestion determining tactics came in the same moment of crisis to the minds of Johnston and Sherman. Sherman says: "There was great (sic) danger always in my mind that Forrest would collect a heavy cavalry command in Mississippi, cross the Tennessee and break up our railroads below Nashville."⁴⁵ Both generals knew there was absolutely no corresponding use for Forrest.

With ready sagacity, the invading commander now contrived to hold Forrest in Mississippi by cunningly sending out raids toward Alabama from Memphis. Forrest encountered Sturgis, in northern Mississippi, bent on such an expedition, June 14th, while the two great generals were locking horns in the woods, as we have seen. Six days later he encountered A. J. Smith, out on like expedition. Neither Sturgis nor Smith proceeded farther on the march than the meeting-place with Forrest. Both retired, after conflict, to Memphis.

It was agreed, however, that General Pillow, a hero of the Mexican War, one of the commanders who had escaped from Grant at Fort Donelson more than two years before, should ride with such force as he could collect in Alabama,

⁴⁴Recollections of Alexander H. Stephens.

⁴⁵Memoirs of General Sherman.

here and there, to the railroad at Dalton to destroy it. Pillow, a brave man in bad luck, started out with 1600 mounted men, poorly equipped, poorly armed, with no artillery, little to eat, and no wagons, on June 20th, the day that Forrest struck A. J. Smith.

As General Pillow approached the village of Lafayette, some twenty miles south of Dalton, on his prescribed line of march, he found a considerable body of the enemy there. Arguing that military science required him to sweep the foe aside before leaving the post in his rear, he drew up at the brick court-house, the doors and windows of which were barricaded with loaded grain sacks, the garrison inside leisurely shooting at him. For an hour the Confederates fired musket balls, as they had not even one cannon. Back to Alabama limply came General Pillow and his men. If General Johnston received notice of the event, in its fullness, he said nothing. Pillow was a good soldier. He at once applied to be attached to Forrest, with his 1600. He had put out scouts. There were only 2000, part negroes, in the Nashville garrison. He and Forrest could hold the city and all the railroad to Chattanooga. This was the feature of a possible generalship that had long disturbed Lincoln, Grant and Sherman in their calculations against Johnston.

Before the battle of Kenesaw Mountain, Major-General Mansfield Lovell arrived at army headquarters, without assignment. Since New Orleans had fallen into the hands of the enemy, under his command, two years before, he had been out of favor with the government. General Johnston, having known him in the "old" army, was much attached to so accomplished a gentleman and so capable a soldier. He had come as the guest of the general commanding. A little while later Johnston sought, with special earnestness, to have Lovell assigned to Stewart's division, upon the promotion of Stewart to command of Polk's corps, but in vain.

General Lovell, anxious to serve General Johnston and to promote the cause of the army, and possessing extraordinary capacity as a topographical engineer, accepted Johnston's invitation to locate extensive field works on the hills above

the Chattahooche's northern bank, behind which the whole army might assemble while, corps by corps, it should be crossed to the other bank in security, when necessity should demand.

Lovell located the line of works, about five miles in length, three or four miles off from the water edge, and General Shoupe, a most accomplished engineer, built them. The whole was completed. General Sherman knew naught of the building. One thousand negro men from the plantations had done the labor, without any draft upon the lines confronting the invader. When, later, Sherman discovered and examined the works, he declared them to be "the strongest of the kind I (he) had ever seen." He added, "I confess I was taken by surprise in the discovery of them." He had counted on catching Johnston between two fires, one on each side of the river. He never caught him anywhere in such unsoldierly position.

The Confederates abandoned Kenesaw Mountain line on the night of July 2d for the same reason that had forced them to evacuate Dalton, two months before—for the same reason that General Lee, with masterly readiness, had successively abandoned his positions from the Wilderness to Petersburg.

Lee had never assailed Grant behind fortifications nor had Johnston assailed Sherman's continuous works. Grant had attacked Lee behind works at every opportunity and had everywhere been repulsed. Sherman reluctantly and seldom sought Johnston, fortified, and when he permitted himself to go counter to his judgment in the premises, by ordering an assault, the result never failed to discourage him.

Sherman says: "Ordering every part (sic) of the army to pursue vigorously on the morning of the 3d of July, I rode into Marietta, just quitted by the rebel rear guard, and was terribly angry at the cautious pursuit by Garrard's cavalry and even by the head of our infantry columns."⁴⁶

Garrard's caution was not without qualifying conditions. Wheeler was protecting the "rebel rear guard." In the

⁴⁶Memoirs of General Sherman, 2, 53

vicinity of the State Military Academy he planted ten pieces of artillery, threw up slight works and dismounted some regiments to protect the guns. He fought there until night, two hours, and then withdrew to the fortifications near the river where the main army rested, throwing up some defenses of his own to prolong the line.

Sherman had failed to capture or even to discover the presence of Johnston's protective works near the Chattahoochee. Now that they were occupied and unassailable, he could do nothing but cross the river ahead of the Confederates.

The game of war between the two masters now presented an entirely new complication. Sherman, over the river, ahead of Johnston and free from him on the Atlanta side, possessed Johnston's base, which was Atlanta; it could not be elsewhere. Johnston, left on the north side, impreguably fortified, controlled the railroad essential to Sherman's connection with his base. Sherman might capture Atlanta, undefended, but he could not feed his army from Georgia and Alabama.

Sherman had now put himself in position where he must put Johnston's army out of the problem. He could proceed no farther on parallels of earthworks. He had plunged his best troops against Johnston on level ground, at Kenesaw, and had suffered disaster in the contact. He knew Atlanta was fortified by the highest art of military engineering. We have seen that his discouragement at the result at Kenesaw had caused him to declare, confidentially, under date June 30th, three days after the battle: "I have no idea of besieging Atlanta, but may cross the Chattahoochee and circle around Atlanta, breaking up its roads."⁴⁷

Here we have a candid confession of dilemma. The great general was confused, nonplused and humiliated. He could not avoid crossing the river, but was too sore in his situation to admit the compulsion; he, above all men, knew that he could not "circle around" an army which he had ceaselessly but vainly tried, night and day for two months, to capture or disperse by straight attacks upon its rear.

⁴⁷Sherman's Home Letters, 300.

General Johnston, full of confidence in himself and in his troops, his plans perfectly prepared and thoroughly informed by his cavalry, bided his time behind the Shoupe works north of the river.

The Shoupe works were there, but the general commanding intended them for one purpose only. He had six pontoon bridges laid, two for each army corps, under protection of the works. He sent nearly all his cavalry across the river to protect the opposite ends. Besides, Governor Brown had called out the Georgia reserves and these were on the Atlanta side, under the command of that accomplished soldier, Major-General G. W. Smith. General Wheeler had orders to protect from the upper side and General Jackson from the lower side, the eastern ends of the pontoons. It was not without some peril from the enemy on the western bank that the Confederate cavalry got over. Perhaps the 8th Confederate was the last to cross, and these troops were shelled in the flat that carried them over.

We shall learn somewhat of the spirit of the troops on either side, and of the wonderful experiences of citizens, who abandoned civil life for the army in the field, from the contents of a letter written on the spot by a young captain of the 8th Confederate to his bride of eight months. General Wheeler received from army headquarters this communication:

“HEADQUARTERS, July 9, 1864, 5 A. M.

“General: General Johnston is very anxious to receive your report as to the character of the force which crossed Isham’s ford. If it is a large force, you will be supported by at least a division of infantry—Walthall’s.

“In taking your troops to oppose it, leave parties in observation on the river, with artillery.

“Very respectfully,

“J. B. MAKALL,
“Aide-de-Camp.”

The writer of the letter was an officer in this “party of observation”:

"CAMP ON THE CHATTAHOOCHE,
Near Pace's Ferry, July 12, 1864.

" I was very, very weary and had fallen asleep when the courier came with your letter, but did not consider it an annoyance to get up, slip on boots, kindle a light and read.

"The day and night before I had been in command of the pickets and skirmishers of the brigade, on the bank of the river, and except for anxiety, natural under the circumstances, and loss of rest had an unusually pleasant time.

"The river at Pace's ferry is but little more than one hundred yards wide and our pickets and the Yankees agreed upon a truce. Both sides would leave their rifle-pits and sit on the banks and converse. Some would go in swimming. The Yankees, being hard pressed for tobacco, proposed trades for the weed, offering knives, canteens, money, almost anything they had. Some of our men would take a plug in the teeth, swim to the meeting with a Yank, bringing the knife or other object of barter. After sundown, the Yankees gathered on the bank to sing national, humorous or sentimental songs. There were some fine voices among them and the melody was extremely grateful on the still summer air. Squads of Confederates would return the serenade, and each applaud the other's performance. This was a most impressive scene. It was not on my line, but on that of Iverson's Georgia brigade. I had orders and forbade a word passed between the pickets. I cannot describe my thoughts as I sat on the bank of that stream, in the heart of my country, watching the acts and familiarity of those hirelings who have followed us, leaving a path of desolation which time will never efface. I thought of our best blood spilled, our desolated homes, our ravished women, driven from their homes, beggars on earth. For my life, I could not enter into the glee.

"I cannot tell you the situation this morning more than I might if one hundred miles off. From what I can learn, I think it quite possible Atlanta will be given up without an engagement. I would regret very much to leave it to the foe and am satisfied it will not be done unless it is for the

best. If we are strong enough to risk a general engagement, the city will not be evacuated. If we are not, it will be evacuated without a struggle and our army saved intact until it can be sufficiently reinforced from other points to take the offensive. The moral effect of failure to defend would probably be greater than the material effect. Either alternative would be severe trial, but nothing like so bad as defeat of the army. Come what may, time and the hour run through the roughest day. I have become reconciled to almost anything that does not cause our army to disband. When we can keep that in the field, I have no fear of the result. I believe the good soldiers of our army are almost all become stoical and greet all phases of fortune with a complacent air. I don't remember a time in the last twelve months when I felt more confident of success than now.

"The greatest drawback is the thought of the increased suffering of our poor country; the anxiety and heart bleeding of the loved ones at home. But God is certainly with us and has promised to be with us to the end. Army correspondents and sensational howlers complain that our cavalry is not in the rear of Sherman all the time. They don't remember that the cavalry here comprise a corps of the army; that we have more of our own lines of communications to protect than the Yankees have for us to attack. Besides, we have to do duty in the trenches, alongside the infantry, and I have no doubt General Johnston will say our duties have been a great deal more arduous than those of any corps of any arm of the service now in the field.

I had some nice biscuit this morning, the first in a long time."

. . .

Now the brilliant energies of General Sherman must be devoted to a negative warfare, the destruction of the railroads that fed the Confederates—a great drop down for him.

Railroads spread to the four points of the compass, out from Atlanta, and every one he must control. An herculean

task, surely, yet it comprised his whole duty, under the conditions.

Sherman's main care, however, in the matter of railroads, was protection for that running from his army to his base—from Atlanta northward to Chattanooga. So he sent for his chief of cavalry, Steedman. "The country behind us," he ordered, "should be cleaned out of all elements out of which guerrillas and loafers are made up; and we should appropriate and put in store all forage and produce within reach. Wherever the people are in the way, ship them to a new country, north and west." Eagerly taking up his commander's view, Steedman recommended that Colonel Brownlow's regiment of east Tennesseans be assigned to him for the prescribed duty of plundering middle Tennessee farms and exiling their wives, daughters and sons. Colonel Brownlow was the son of "Parson" Brownlow, the notorious agitator and Unionist of Knoxville. Steedman assured General Sherman that the whole country between Atlanta and Chattanooga was "infested with guerrilla bands and these men knew every road and bridle-path, and understood the political sentiments of the people, and hence would not be so readily imposed upon and misled by rebel sympathizers as troops who are strangers in the country."

The progress of the campaign now required Sherman to engage in his last recourse, the breaking of Johnston's railroad connections. To this end, he sent out two separate expeditions, one under Stoneman, to operate between Atlanta and West Point, the other under Rousseau, to strike many points in central Alabama.

Stoneman must cross from the north to the south side of the Chattahoochee, to reach the field of operations. He failed to cross. Wheeler heard of his project and met him, face to face, on the opposite bank. Stoneman reported his disappointment. He said: "I was very anxious to strike the railroad, from personal as well as from other considerations, but I became convinced that to attempt it would incur risks inadequate to results, and unless we could hold the bridge, as well as penetrate into the country, the risk of capture and dispersion, with loss of animals (as we could

hear of no ford) was almost certain. It is impossible to move without every step we take being known, women as well as men acting as scouts and messengers."

It was this very movement that Senator B. H. Hill, as we have seen, brought up to General Johnston at Kenesaw, as argument why he should "fight," to prevent, and which Johnston passed over as of no consequence in his plans.

Not being able to cross over to the railroad side of the river, Stoneman made himself safe and comfortable in camp at Villa Rica, ten miles out on the north, or safe side. There "blackberries, beef and bacon" were found. He tarried until his horses were shod. Thus failed, in the initial, General Sherman's change of policy of war.

The other expedition, with like purpose, was put under General Lovell H. Rousseau. Sherman ordered Rousseau to go in person or to send "some good officer, with 2500 good cavalry," well armed, without wagons, but with a full complement of pack mules loaded with ammunition, some sugar, coffee and bread upon an expedition out from Decatur into central Alabama. The feed for the horses, the meat, poultry and cornmeal would come from the country. Substantially this was a repetition of the Streight raid, sent by Rosecrans and captured by Forrest. The expedition was "to do all the mischief possible." It was the initial of the use of cavalry in which General Sherman placed his hope of reaching his "objective, Joe Johnston." He had no other hope.

General Rousseau was pleased to take command himself. He waited until the hard fight at Harrisburg, Mississippi, which General A. J. Smith gave Forrest, and then on July 10th started. On the night of July 12th he camped near Ashville, Alabama, capturing there corn for his horses and supplies for his men; not very much, but sufficient for the day.

General Clanton offered some resistance and General Pillow was prepared to participate. Clanton lost his staff, killed. Some small iron works, Janney's and Crowe's, in Calhoun county, were destroyed. Some irregular troops from Montgomery came up to Cheehaw and firing followed,

with limited casualties. A youth, a son of a prominent citizen of Montgomery, Mr. Bethea, having volunteered his services with this expedition, fell in the action. General Rousseau returned to Sherman at Marietta, reporting more than thirty miles of railroad destroyed, also a water-tank at Notasulga, and railroad stations, with some supplies, at Opelika, Auburn and Loachapoka, no great deal in all. The damage done to the Army of Tennessee was imperceptible in its effect upon its operations. Several valuable lives were sacrificed, always an irreparable loss. General Sherman was indignant because of the small results of the expedition. At Auburn, upon the approach of the enemy in full force, Captain Thomas H. Francis, of a Tennessee regiment assigned there, collected hastily eighteen citizens, convalescents from the army hospital, etc., armed with shot-guns, and mounted them on private horses impressed for the occasion. He went forth boldly, reconnoitered and skirmished, and then held the invader off for twenty hours, a brave deed. The raiders entered the town on the afternoon of July 18th and left next morning. Slaves of the town and vicinity, encouraged by the presence of so large a force hostile to their masters, broke into the stores and carried off all property found there. The enemy entered Talladega at seven o'clock on the morning of July 16th. Talladega county sent more than its proportion of troops in the army from Alabama, but the people left at home were not inclined to belligerency. The railroad station-house was burned, but no trackage was disturbed. The enemy was even considerate enough to remove from the station-house some private property, to protect it. Major W T Walthall was commander of the post, but had neither men nor arms for defense. General Rousseau carried off several hundred farm mules and horses and several hundred negro men. About the noon hour, when a certain farmer's teams, ten mules, perhaps, had come in to be fed, as the custom was, the general and some of his men rode up. Rousseau was a native of Kentucky, with southern manners and tone of voice. They invited themselves to seats on the front porch of the residence and their blue uniform was so cov-

ered with white dust that the true color was not recognized. The general proposed to the farmer to take away the mules, as they were in fine order. The proprietor replied that the "Confederacy" should be more equitable in its requisitions; that he had only the week before delivered several. He was told the Confederacy was not responsible, to his great disgust.

Rousseau's raid into Alabama, the initial of General Sherman's reform policy of reaching his "objective, Joe Johnston," was not more effective than an ordinary tornado of the latitude might have been in disturbing the military situation. In his absence, however, the Confederate government came upon the scene, offering the invader a new objective, in lieu of Johnston—Hood.

General Sherman made cautious approaches upon the Shoupe entrenchments, and, discovering the impracticability of assailing them, threw up like works higher up the river and thus secured his own crossing. On July 8th he transferred two of his corps, perhaps six divisions, to the east side. Johnston's cavalry, as we have seen, was already crossed thither, and on the night of the 9th the three army corps, each corps using two pontoons, crossed without molestation from the enemy or any mishap. The army was halted on the eminence overlooking Peachtree Creek to the north, three miles from the river and seven from the city of Atlanta. The position commanded the valley of Peachtree Creek, a deep and muddy stream with precipitous banks, unfordable, that rose northeast of Atlanta in the general direction of Decatur and emptied itself into the Chattahoochee, north of the railroad bridge and near it. Peachtree Creek and its valley, in a word, separated the two armies when both had crossed the river.

On the afternoon of July 16 General Sherman crossed the last of his armies the Army of the Cumberland, under Thomas, and massed the whole on the river. On the 17th General Wheeler reported the fact to Johnston. The news was received with great satisfaction.

The Confederate commander now worked with utmost energy. He sent for Lieutenant-General Stewart. "Go

find the best position," he said, "on our side of Peachtree Creek for our army to occupy. Do not entrench. Find all the good artillery positions and have them cleared of timber."⁴⁸

Immediately mounting his high-bred bay mare and calling three staff officers to accompany him, the general rode away at full speed up the river. In an hour he rode back alone, at full speed. The staff had been left to superintend the disposition of the troops, as ordered by him. The longed-for event approached; the great battle was to be precipitated.

Knowing General Sherman as he did, and his manner of handling his army, General Johnston expected him to scatter it in motion. He was sure Sherman would cross Peachtree Creek with a fragment, while the other parts moved to more or less remote points. The plan was to attack these fragments at their different points of crossing and capture or drive them into the fork of the creek and the river. That done, the army would be thrown in full strength upon the other parts. Hardee and Hood received orders to be in readiness to move forward at a moment's notice.

Let us see now the movement General Sherman actually set on foot and take note of the remarkably correct military anticipation of the Confederate commander. On July 17th General McPherson was sent straight across the country to Stone Mountain, on the Augusta railroad, nearly twenty miles from the massed Confederate army on his rear; General Schofield was sent, the same day, in the same direction to Decatur, on that railroad, at least twelve miles from the Confederate army in his rear. The object of these expeditions was to destroy the road and thus prevent reinforcements to Johnston from Beauregard, at Charleston, or from Lee at Petersburg. The powerful army of Thomas was left behind on the north side of Peachtree Creek and wholly apart from either of the other armies.

McPherson and Schofield, off on independent expeditions

⁴⁸Hughes' Johnston, 335.

of destruction of property, General Thomas, on July 19th, had completed numerous bridges over Peachtree Creek and crossed the Army of the Cumberland at leisure.⁴⁹

This was the exact situation that Johnston had longed for and for which he was fully prepared as night fell on July 17th. Atlanta had been made impregnable. The Georgia reserves, under Major-General G. W. Smith, C. S. A., had been placed in the city. Johnston would attack Thomas as he was in the act of crossing by "numerous bridges" an unfordable stream. He would probably capture or drive the foe. If Thomas attempted to retreat, his bridges would be gone; if he followed the creek down stream, on the Confederate side, he would be forced into the pocket formed by the junction with the unfordable river. As soon as the work with Thomas could be completed the battle would be transferred to the other disconnected armies of the invader. If perchance the Confederates got the worst of the encounter, they would fall back under protection of the fortified city. There they could await in perfect security the approach of the enemy. If the enemy should attempt a siege, the Confederate main army would march out upon either wing, while General Smith's Georgia troops should hold the city. If General Sherman should resort to a feint of siege, while with his cavalry, supported by infantry, he attempted to cut the railroads, there was nothing in the experiences of the long campaign from Dalton to Atlanta to justify him in the hope of success.

The situation with Johnston at nightfall, July 17th, was entirely satisfactory to him. It was satisfactory to the army and to the country. The very day, next before Kenesaw, referring to the events and conditions of this even then long drawn out campaign, Lee wrote to the President of "the reported success of General Joseph E. Johnston." Lee so saw. Surely Sherman was more remote from his "objective, Joe Johnston," July 17th, than he was at Resaca, May 15th.

General Bragg visited the army on July 14th, three days before the events just related. He volunteered to say to

⁴⁹Sherman's Report, Off. War Record.

Johnston that his visit had no official meaning. Johnston offered to explain army conditions, but Bragg did not care to hear. Johnston offered to assemble the lieutenant-generals; Bragg declined to receive them except as friends. The visitor said, however, that he was on his way to Mississippi to confer with Lieutenant-General Lee, and from that position to confer with Lieutenant-General Kirby Smith, beyond the Mississippi, the object being to attempt to reinforce the Army of Tennessee. General Bragg went no farther than Montgomery and neither saw Lee nor communicated with Smith.

At ten o'clock at night, July 17th, a telegram was handed to General Johnston from the adjutant-general of the Confederacy, General Samuel Cooper, dictated to him by the secretary of war, Seddon, and previously agreed to by the president. The general was engaged at the moment bending over a map, indicating to Major Prestman, engineer, some points at which the entrenchments about Atlanta should be strengthened. The message read:

"I am directed by the secretary of war to inform you that as you have failed to arrest the advance of the enemy to the vicinity of Atlanta, far in the interior of Georgia, and express no confidence that you can defeat or repel him, you are hereby relieved from the Army and Department of Tennessee, which you will immediately turn over to General Hood."

Thus perished the southern Confederacy. Charles Fox declared in a crisis of English affairs, precipitated by neglect of the ministry: "Ignorance in a statesman is crime." If the ripened opportunity of Johnston's army at Atlanta was unknown to the Confederate government, it was known to General Sherman and burdened him with intense anxiety and profound confusion. It was known to all officers and soldiers of the Army of Tennessee and filled them with buoyant joy. It was known to the people of the land, who reposed in it a perfect confidence as the forerunner of their independence. It was known to General Robert E. Lee and satisfied him. "When President Davis asked General

Lee," wrote John B. Gordon, "for an opinion as to the wisdom of removing General Johnston from command of that army, General Lee did me the honor, as I presume he honored other corps commanders, to counsel with me as to the policy of such an act.

I therefore expressed the opinion that there was no one except General Lee himself who could take Johnston's place.

I could not forget his expression and I give, I believe, the exact words he used. He said: 'General Johnston is a patriot and an able soldier. He is upon the ground and knows his army and its surroundings, and knows how to use it better than any of us.'"⁵⁰

Seddon, secretary of war, said, *ex post facto*, that he had made a great mistake. Poor Seddon, the things he left undone were his best. Seddon, lawyer, Unionist, three months after Mr. Davis took office, valetudinarian, had made a great mistake in overcoming the president's reluctance to assigning Johnston to command at Dalton, but would now atone for his earlier sin. He would write the order, as his own, relieving Johnston. Nevertheless, if the president could be made to believe Johnston would not abandon Atlanta without a "fight," regardless of gain or loss, Johnston would remain undisturbed.

A little farther along, we shall see more into the catastrophe and its impulse. It will suffice here to say that the evidence is conclusive; the lives lost after July 17th, 1864, in the Confederate armies, anywhere, were a sacrifice to the morbid allurements of difficulty and martyrdom which controlled the Confederate civil government. Mr. Seddon, Mr. Memminger, Mr. Ben Hill, had been driven upon what they sincerely believed to be a plane of speculative politics, the Confederacy. In order to find relief from other men's opinions, Mr. Davis chose advisers who had none worthy of his cause.

General Hood was notified instantly. The following farewell address, written the same night, was read to the army next morning:

⁵⁰General Gordon's Reminiscences, 132-53.

"HEADQUARTERS, July 17, 1864.

"Soldiers of the Army of Tennessee: In obedience to orders of the War Department I turn over to General Hood command of the Army and Department of Tennessee.

"I cannot leave this noble army without expressing my admiration of the high military qualities it has displayed. A long and arduous campaign has made conspicuous every soldierly virtue, endurance of toil, obedience to orders, brilliant courage. The enemy has never attacked but to be repulsed and severely punished. You, soldiers, have never argued but from your courage and never counted your foes. No longer leader, I will still watch your career, and will rejoice in your victories. To one and all I offer assurance of my friendship and bid an affectionate farewell.

"J. E. JOHNSTON,
"General."

The order was read to the army and fell like a bolt from a clear sky. "What does it mean?" was on every man's lips. The activities of the day before were suspended; a silence like the morgue hovered over headquarters. Officers of highest rank came to the general in consternation and took their departure with hanging heads. All day long coteries of men stood whispering in dismay. It was a common thing to see a plain soldier alone, in unwonted meditation, his arms folded against a tree and his head resting there in silence. It needed only a leader to bring the whole army into formal protest.⁵¹ I shall never forget my own sensations the moment the wholly unexpected news reached me. I remember them distinctly to this day. A chasm seemed to open at my feet and all things created seemed to rush into it. I gazed around vacantly. We have read of Hon. F. S. Lyon, a few pages back. I have, direct, this incident: As was his custom, the venerable gentleman returned to his residence from the near-by town post-office, with the morning mail under his arm. A man of singular dignity and composure, members of his family were

⁵¹Edgar A. Jones, in *History of the Eighteenth Alabama Infantry*, and many other narratives made to the author.

shocked, as he entered their circle, to see his countenance ghastly pale and his manner agitated. "Are you ill, sir?" The sole response was, in modulated tone: "General Johnston has been removed!" A youth, a soldier of Hampton's cavalry in Virginia, wrote home: "There is a report that General Johnston is removed and a great mistake made. He is considered here the ablest of our commanders, after Lee."⁵²

General Hood rode to army headquarters at sunrise. He met General S. G. French on the way. French remarked upon the misfortune which had befallen the army in the removal of General Johnston, but pledged the new commander his ready support. Hood grasped his subordinate's hand warmly. Arrived at headquarters, Hood besought Johnston to disregard the order; "Pocket the order and fight your battle," he cried. As soon as Hardee could be found, and Stewart, Hood wrote a telegram to the president, to be signed by the three. All signed it. The purport was a protest. Command of the army could not be changed without greatest peril. The answer in refusal came. The message was repeated. The president, point blank, refused.

Later in the day, the 18th, General Johnston sent this weird reply to the order relieving him. It was an exasperating consent to a fatal empiricism:

"To the Honorable Secretary of War:

"Your dispatch of yesterday received and obeyed. Command of the Army and Department of Tennessee has been transferred to General Hood. As to the alleged cause of my removal, I assert that Sherman's army is much stronger, compared with that of Tennessee, than Grant's compared with that of northern Virginia. Yet the enemy has been compelled to advance much more slowly to the vicinity of Atlanta than to that of Richmond and Petersburg, and penetrated much deeper into Virginia than into Georgia."

The government was perfectly aware of these facts. The deposed soldier was not alone, of his profession, to appreciate the irony of the closing paragraph: "Confident

⁵²John C. Calhoun.

language by a military commander is not usually regarded as evidence of competency."

While Hood was yet striving to delay the execution of the president's order, General Sherman heard the news. He wrote: "At this critical (sic) moment the Confederate Government rendered us a most valuable service. Being dissatisfied with the Fabrian policy of General Johnston, it relieved him and General Hood was substituted to command the Confederate army. The character of the leader is a large factor in the game of war and I confess I was pleased at this change."⁵³

⁵³Battles and Leaders of the Civil War.

CHAPTER XVI

1864

HOOD'S ATLANTA CAMPAIGN

"If the same officer" [J. E. Johnston] "who was upheld in command by the anti-administration party had vigorously attacked Sherman at Atlanta, when directed, the fortunes of the war would have been changed (?) and Sherman hurled back to Nashville over a sterile and wasted country—his retreat little less disastrous than Napoleon's from Moscow. He did not do so and was relieved—General Hood, a true and spirited soldier, taking his place—but the opportunity was then gone; and to this delay more than to any other cause the southern people will attribute their overthrow, whenever history comes to be truly written."¹

The excerpt is from daily general conversation between Mr. Davis, confined in a casement at Fort Monroe, and his surgeon, Lieutenant-Colonel Craven, United States army. The uncandid impeachment of General Johnston, the unsophisticated self-conviction, the grotesque travesty upon the facts, commingle.

The "anti-administration party," in the American sense of the phrase, had no existence in the Confederacy. In the United States, however, in the wartime, political parties never lost their coherence or activity. For example, in the federal election of 1862, the next following the election of Lincoln, the Democrats carried the House of Representatives. In the quadrennial federal elections of 1864, Mr. Lincoln, as we have seen, was seriously apprehensive of his own defeat.

Political conditions generally in the Confederacy were

¹Craven's *Prison Life of Jefferson Davis*, 228.

similar to those in the revolution—the voters were absorbed in the war question. Provisional President Davis, chosen for a year by the provisional Congress at Montgomery, was elected without opposition, November, 1861, for six years. No canvass of the voters was made. No opposition was suggested. Only three months and ten days before the election day Mr. Davis had ridden upon the glorious field of Manassas. No competitor for his office appeared; nevertheless, in a single instance, a test was made of his popularity and failed to impeach it. Robert Barnwell Rhett, a former United States senator, announced for the Confederate House of Representatives from the Charleston, South Carolina, district, pledged to arouse the confirmed lethargy of the government at Richmond, was defeated at the polls.

No political or party organization supported or renounced the administration. Critical remark was individual opinion. One of the men of long-established public influence in Alabama, John A. Winston, a resident of Mobile, a former governor and Democratic states rights leader, visited the new federal capital, Montgomery, and returned home to say the government would fail; in the midst of vast wealth it had no money, had no plans to get any, and could not, in the gross neglect, survive. Winston immediately applied for and received a commission as colonel in the army, resolved to share the forlorn hope. Even at that early day his conclusions had taken firm hold.²

Recurring to the conversations with his surgeon in the casemate, Mr. Davis admits the easy thing to do, to establish a sound Confederate currency, the imperative necessity to the life of his cause and the certainty of conclusive results from its war. He thought a sound Confederate currency would appeal with powerful effect "to the avarice of New England." He thought, as all intelligent southern men

²Public estimate of the Confederate civil government, early and late, may be found in John A. Campbell's letter to Associate Justice Curtis, *Century Mag.*, Sept., 1889; in the correspondence of Senator Clay with Senator Yancey; speeches of Senator Wigfall; writings of William Gilmore Simms; writings of William F. Samford; references in "A Belle of the Fifties," etc., etc.

thought, that such a currency was readily obtainable, under the peculiar circumstances, and that, once obtained, the ramifications of its influence would save the Confederate government, otherwise impossible. He neglected the necessary executive functions in the premises because he "had not time (?) to study and take the responsibility of directing." In fact, the "anti-administration party," the individuals who upheld General Johnston, had forced the matter of finance and currency upon the administration, which had no initiative thought. The "anti-administration party," so-called, had thus, in effect, black-balled the great theme. The topic so black-balled did not meet fate on its merits nor fate peculiar to itself, among meritorious topics of public importance. The president never had been known to concede anything to advisers.

In the absence of familiar political parties, by which outlet southern citizens were wont to give voice to opinion on public affairs, the Confederate people were not slow to classify by common consent the men in the lead. All men in the lead were weighed and known. In the first class, public opinion set up Albert Sidney Johnston, Robert E. Lee, Joseph E. Johnston, R. M. T. Hunter, Robert Barnwell Rhett, Robert Toombs, William L. Yancey, Judah P. Benjamin, Louis T. Wigfall, Howell Cobb. A class of men next below, true and brave men, Mr. Davis, Benjamin Hill, General Bragg, General Hood, etc. Tried by the crucible of subsequent events the record may forever attest the estimate as here written of them.

The conduct of the Dalton-Atlanta campaign was on the same parallel of controlling necessity with every great campaign of all Confederate commanders operating within the military prescription of the civil government. The contending armies had reached the gates of Atlanta. Sherman stood face to face with the fate of Napoleon at Moscow, Mr. Davis admits.

Let us try the effects of the president's interference at the critical moment by the simple resort to comparisons.

In what military rule of conduct was the operation of the Army of Tennessee, in the Dalton-Atlanta campaign, differentiated and excluded from the sanction given by the president to all previous campaigns of like general character by various commanders?

In the month of March, 1862, General Albert Sidney Johnston commanded Confederate troops on the northern boundaries of Kentucky, supported by Polk, Hardee, Breckinridge and Buckner. He retreated through Kentucky, through Tennessee, through northern Alabama to northern Mississippi, precipitately, in necessary confusion and without striking a blow. Sixty days later Beauregard retreated before Buell from Shiloh to Tupelo. Bragg took command and retreated, without battle, to Chattanooga. Bragg next abandoned Kentucky, abandoned Tennessee and was promoted. Pemberton retreated before Grant, under the direct orders of the president, to effect the surrender of his army. General Lee retreated from Maryland, from Pennsylvania, from the Wilderness. Upon the hypothesis of the transcendent fame of this commander, he would have continued his last retreat until he might have placed Grant in the corresponding jeopardy in which Mr. Davis admits Johnston had entrapped Sherman at Atlanta. But his genius was subordinated to the civil authorities and lost to his cause.

General Grant set out from the Wilderness upon his proclamation to his subordinates: "Where Lee goes, there I go." It was enough. The military necessity which compelled Lee to retreat to Petersburg remained, and logically should have carried him farther south, and nearer his abundant source of supplies. Grant's dependence, "attrition," had already been lost to him, the moment Lee left Richmond behind him, going south. The civil authorities resolved to sacrifice the military necessity to the defense of Richmond. The resolution sacrificed both Lee and Johnston. The resolution eliminated the science of war from the Confederate prospects. It nipped in the bud the most masterly military situation, held by the Confederacy, that the science of modern war ever developed. Grant, following Lee, south

of Richmond, would have been in as great straits as Sherman, following Johnston. Ultimately, and soon, the two Confederate armies must have united.

The Dalton-Atlanta campaign stands alone in the history of Confederate warfare in this, that Johnston faced the ablest of the invading leaders, stood against the greatest odds for the longest time and over the greatest distance, lost fewer men in proportion and less material or war, and at last possessed greatest promise of decisive success.³

A fine specimen of the Anglo-Saxon type was the new commander, John B. Hood, six feet tall, with light hair, blue eyes and fair skin. Educated at West Point, he left the school with a reputation for courage, without, however, having shown unusual ability in his classes. His brigade was known in the Army of Northern Virginia so well to General Lee that the commander expressed an earnest wish to add others like it to his army. As division commander his capacity rose. At the front of his division he lost the whole of a leg at Chickamauga, and physical incapacity thereafter should have retired him from the field.

"Put your order in your pocket and fight your battle, General Johnston," urged Hood. Hardee and Stewart came and the three united in earnest plea by telegram to the president not to take, against all rules of war, the great risk of delaying the pending battle by a change of commanders on the eve of it. The answer came immediately

³The post-bellum exhaustive history written by Mr. Davis devotes in special pleading a suspiciously inordinate amount of space to the military career of General J. E. Johnston. In the matter of his removal from the army at Atlanta, this apology is offered: "From many quarters, including such as had most urged his assignment, came delegations, petitions and letters urging me to remove General Johnston from command of the army and assign that important trust to some officer who would resolutely hold and defend Atlanta." The alleged obligation to public sentiment, presupposing the actual presence of the thing venerated, must be qualified by the president's habit. A similar text presents itself. In the same volume the author exalts his own intelligence and firmness. General A. S. Johnston abandoned Tennessee. All Tennessee rose up against him. "The demagogues took up the cry and hounded on one another." The Congress ordered an inquiry. To all this the president calmly replied: "If Sidney Johnston is not a general, the Confederacy has none to give you." *Rise and Fall of the Confederate Government.*

that the change must be made. Hood demurred even yet, and a second refusal followed. General Johnston, at Hood's pleading, did remain during the forenoon of the 18th, giving orders through the adjutant-general. When the final decision of the president came, he mounted his horse, rode to Atlanta, took his wife to Macon and retired to privacy.

General Hood spent the 18th in endeavoring to have Johnston retained temporarily. Mr. Davis omitted this valuable fact from his narrative to Dr Craven. He spent the 19th studying the location of the army, none save the ground occupied by his own corps did he know. Mr. Davis puts the fault of delay on Johnston.

All day the 19th Hood was in confusion; all day Thomas built bridges, unmolested, across Peachtree creek, and all day McPherson and Schofield were widely separated from him and from each other. The great soldier is poet and prophet. Johnston had predicted Sherman's movements and was ready. It was the very situation he had longed for. It was the supreme moment to the long struggle of the Confederacy for life. There lay success, final as Waterloo for England.

Hood sought to execute Johnston's plan. The first blunder was in unreadiness at the hour. We have seen that Johnston made ready the afternoon and night of July 17th—the night of his removal—to attack Thomas as soon as he might attempt to cross Peachtree creek on his several bridges. Hood allowed him to cross from the north side on the forenoon of the 20th, entrench on the south side and place masked batteries on the north side elevations to fire over those entrenchments, if attacked.

The order was given to align the army on the south side of the creek, Stewart the left, Hardee in the centre and Cheatham, commanding Hood's old corps, on the right, with dismounted cavalry of Wheeler extending Cheatham's right, in the direction of Decatur.

The battle began three hours after the late time General Hood himself had appointed, that is, it was opened at four

o'clock in the afternoon by Stewart. The soldiers were distrustful. The wonder is they fought at all. It was very bloody fighting, for the most part done by Stewart. General Hood was in Atlanta, but was sadly needed on the front. He complained of Hardee. Hardee had never been suspected of unreadiness, "Old Reliable" was the name the soldiers gave him. The moment Hood took command, perfect order gave way to general confusion; universal confidence in the head of the army was lost to suspicion, distrust and resentment.

While Thomas employed the whole of Hood's army, Sherman led up from their raid both McPherson and Schofield upon the Confederate right, where Wheeler's dismounted men were, and drove them—25,000 against 2500. The next morning, the 21st, while Sherman was still getting into position, McPherson rushed upon the barricades which Wheeler had built in the night. The cavalry fought handsomely. They repulsed several assaults, until the enemy flanked and captured the barricades. Wheeler rallied his men, surprised the victors and recovered the captured position.

General Sherman spent all day, the 21st, in building field-works that he felt sure General Hood would attack on the 22d.

On the night of the 21st Hood put two corps, Stewart's and his old corps, now under Major-General Cheatham, in line of battle. He ordered Hardee to make a night march to the rear of the enemy. The straight line was only six or seven miles to Decatur, where the order required him to strike first, but the narrow road, through dense woods, made the marching distance thirteen miles. Hardee represented that his men had been without sleep on the night of the 20th, following the battle of that afternoon; that they had been at work on trenches and marching and counter-marching all day in the hot sun of the 21st, and that it was not safe to expect them to reach a point thirteen miles over a dusty and difficult road ready to open battle by dawn of the 22d.

It was then ordered by General Hood that the attack on

the enemy's flank should be made at a point nearer than Decatur by the infantry, but Wheeler should go on to that town and attack the garrison known to be there.

General Hood appeared mounted on Cheatham's right before dawn, and there sat his horse listening for Hardee's opening guns. As Hardee marched in the night, the head of his column struck a mill-pond. He aroused a citizen living near to seek information concerning the continuance of the road. There was no continuance of the road, was the answer. How deep the water of the pond? Of varying depth; over a man's head generally. It was half-past twelve o'clock in the day before Hardee, marching through scrubby oak forest so thick that his regiments moved without alignment, reached position to form for battle.

The battle opened. The fighting was terribly destructive. Hardee reported it, "the battle of Atlanta," as one of the bloodiest of the war. General Blair, of Sherman's army, wrote:

"On the next morning [the 23d] at 10 o'clock we had a truce for burying the dead. As we had given up the greater part of the ground over which the battle had been fought the day before, most of our dead were within their lines [Hardee's]. We had suffered very severely; we had lost many valuable officers, including General McPherson, but as we had fought from behind entrenchments all the time, the Confederate loss had necessarily been much greater than ours. As the dead were separated into different piles by the working parties sent out from each army, the difference was very striking and must have been observed by every one." Sherman says the Confederate piles contained 3200 bodies. If so, the Confederate loss in killed and wounded must have been at least 15,000. He says his own loss, behind works, was 3521 killed and wounded. Hardee says the victory was with the Confederates, but their commanding general was not equal to his opportunity of reaping the fruit and nothing was gained. The Confederates lost Major-General W. H. T. Walker, an exceptionally fine officer, a Georgian.

General Wheeler's part in the battle of Atlanta, July 22d, was specially creditable to him. He was attached, as just stated, to Hardee's flank movement. While the great battle raged, Wheeler reached Decatur. His official report says:

"My orders from General Hardee were to attack Decatur at 1 P. M., which was the enemy's extreme left, and owing to the extreme curvature of his line was far in his rear. General Hardee supposed the place to be occupied only by cavalry, but on reconnoitering the position in person about two o'clock I found that a division of infantry, strongly entrenched, occupied the town. Having communicated this fact to General Hardee, I dismounted my command and moved upon the enemy at the appointed hour. Just as I was moving my line, the enemy commenced to throw out two regiments of infantry to meet my approach. These were overthrown, a number of prisoners captured and the remainder driven in confusion into the enemy's works, from which we received a most galling fire from both infantry and artillery. Seeing the strength of the position in front, I threw a force upon his right flank and rear right, with the right of my line covering the enemy's front. From these positions simultaneous charges were made upon the enemy, the troops bearing upon the enemy's right being somewhat the more advanced. At first the galling fire made the most exposed portion of my line waver, but, quickly rallying, the onset was renewed and with a triumphant shout the entire line of works was carried."

The tactical art and energy here were characteristic; a separation of the attacking column, to create confusion in the attacked. General Johnston seldom applied those tactics; Wheeler generally used them. Napoleon theoretically condemned them. General Lee, in the seven days' battle of 1862, brought Stonewall Jackson from the Valley to his support, on the Chickahominy, not into line with him, but far away, upon McClellan's right. At Chancellorsville, the next year, Lee divided his army in three parts, the parts combined not exceeding one-third of Hooker's confronting

host, and won with each part—Jackson's on his left, Wilcox's, at Salem Church, on his right, and he, with the remainder, on the enemy's front. Wheeler's apparently settled rule of tactics in action was to attack the solid column of the enemy simultaneously with fractions of his own force, at various points, and with such vigor as to confuse them. A distinguished soldier of Sherman's army remarked long years after the war: "General Wheeler was the only commander on either side who could be seen at five different places in a fight at the same time." Leaving off the illustrative slang, General Wheeler kept his head cool in a fight and his physical energy at highest tension. He dismounted regiments, even brigades, in action; remounted them for different use; built barricades; charged, mounted; retreated, on occasion, with wonderful celerity of thought and consistency of plan.

The report of the fight at Decatur continues:

"Some 225 prisoners, a large number of small arms, 1 twelve-pound gun, 1 forge, 1 battery wagon, 1 caisson and 6 wagons and teams, together with the captain of the battery and most of his men, were captured and brought off. We also captured his camp equipage, stoves and hospitals. Just as I was pursuing the enemy beyond the town, three of General Hardee's staff officers came to me, in rapid succession, directing that I should reinforce General Hardee as rapidly as possible. The pursuit was stopped and all my available troops, at a gallop, moved to General Hardee's position. The troops under my command fought warmly until the pressure upon him ceased and, night coming on, we bivouacked for the night." Veterans yet living who rode with Wheeler retain a lively recollection of the day at Decatur and the part of Wheeler and his men in the battle of Atlanta.

The enemy's flight led, in part, through the town cemetery. A Confederate wag, in pursuit, noticing the dead body of a bluecoat, just fallen, ejaculated: "Well, my friend, you are a long way from home to find a graveyard."

For five days after the bloody and awful work of the 22d, General Sherman practically suspended effort to carry

the fortifications Johnston had built and which Hood then occupied. As at Kenesaw, he had failed. If he had not failed, he must have marched into Atlanta and taken full possession on July 22d.

The greatest raid he had ever undertaken was now imposed upon General Sherman, in *dernier ressort*. It would be his final test of the new expedient. He organized a most formidable cavalry force, composed of Garrard's division, 4000 men, McCook's division, 3200, Stoneman's, 2200—in all, 9400⁴ perfectly equipped men and horses, armed with the latest repeating carbines and pistols. The commanding officers were all West Pointers, all tried men. Stoneman was the oldest of the three, having served in the war with Mexico.

The three divisions started for Hood's rear, to break up utterly the railroads from Atlanta to West Point and from Atlanta to Macon. Stoneman marched from Decatur, Garrard from the same vicinity, McCook from the north side of the Chattahooche. Stoneman and Garrard were to unite at Macon, ride down to Andersonville, some forty miles, and there release and arm the 35,000 prisoners of war held by the Confederacy. "While these are in progress," wrote Sherman to Halleck, in Washington, "I will give employment to all the rebel army in Atlanta."

Wheeler's men, except a regiment or two, were in the trenches. McCook crossed on a pontoon, below Campbellton, cut the Atlanta and West Point railroad at Palmetto station, tearing up several miles, burning the ties and twisting the rails. He rode across to the Atlanta and Macon line to Lovejoy station, where he found Hardee's wagons and headquarters' baggage, all of which he burned, slaughtered eight hundred mules, set fire to one hundred bales of cotton, tore up five miles of track and captured several hundred hospital and quartermasters clerks, invalids and loafers from the army. Stoneman destroyed seventeen locomotives and more than one hundred cars, on the Macon and Savannah railroad. Garrard's part was less destructive, as we shall see, and for good reason. He did his best.

⁴Off. War Rec., Serial No. 74, p. 957.

Wheeler's regiments, mounted and on observation, reported the raiders to him on the skirmish line before the entrenchments on July 27th. General Hood was yet at his headquarters in Atlanta, five miles away. Wheeler sent a hurried message requesting permission to mount his men and pursue. At quarter past four in the afternoon Aide-de-Camp Smith answered that the commanding general could not spare him; the commanding general paid little heed to the news of the raid. When he heard of Sherman's dispatch of the infantry to guard the bridge of the Chattahoochee, and to guard the supplies at Marietta, he jumped at the conclusion that the enemy was preparing to raise the siege of Atlanta.⁵ Wheeler, he thought, would soon be put upon the rear of the whole retreating army of General Sherman.

Twenty minutes later, a second refusal to permit Wheeler to pursue came. At eleven o'clock in the morning Smith wrote: "In reply to your dispatches regarding movements of the enemy's cavalry, General Hood directs that you detach what force you can spare to follow this raid and keep it in observation."

Kelly mounted his division, and struck Garrard marching upon Jonesboro, thirty miles from Atlanta, on the Macon railroad, drove him across Flat Creek, pursued him, capturing a few wagons and some horses and arms.⁶ Here Garrard disappeared from the event. When Sherman heard of the failure of this young officer, his heart sank. "I now became satisfied that cavalry could not, or would not, make a sufficient lodgment on the railroad below Atlanta, and that nothing would suffice but for us to reach it with the main army."⁷

Finally, after an entire day of solicitation and refusal, at nine o'clock at night Wheeler received the reluctant order: "General Hood directs that you go yourself in pursuit of the enemy."

Kelly was already gone on the trail and Garrard already disposed of. General Iverson, too, under the instructions to

⁵Hardee's Off. Report.

⁶Off. War Record, Serial 74, p. 953.

⁷Memoirs of General Sherman, vol. ii, p. 98.

send the force that he could "spare," had been placed by Wheeler in pursuit of Stoneman. Wheeler as yet knew nothing of McCook and did not hear of his part until the news reached him from General Hood, simultaneously with the order to go out himself. It will be recalled, as heretofore stated, that General W. H. Jackson and his cavalry, of Polk's army, brought from Demopolis, was never under Wheeler at any time. Jackson, too weak to confront him, had reported McCook's presence to army headquarters; thus the news reached Wheeler.

Wheeler rode into Jonesboro about dawn of the 28th with Ashby's five hundred men and was there joined by Anderson's brigade. There he heard from citizens of the departure of the enemy and of their destructive work on the railroad track, six miles on toward Macon. When he reached that point, he was informed the enemy had gone on to Fayetteville.

Arriving at Fayetteville at midnight, he heard the enemy had changed their course and had turned back toward the Chattahooche. Starting out at a gallop, the gait that had been followed all day, his column overtook and struck the foe at Line Creek. They had already crossed the bridge, destroyed the flooring and built barricades of logs on the opposite side. The swift and long pursuit, in hot weather, by men and horses that had been poorly fed and hard-worked for many months previous, caused many, both men and horses, to fall out on the road, so that when General Wheeler struck Line Creek his force numbered only about 400. The bridge was repaired, the troops crossed over and the enemy were attacked behind their barricades, driven and pursued. Every few hundred yards, however, they halted, threw together fallen timber and fought.

While this was going on, about 100 of the men who had fallen behind came up, their horses having regained strength. The enemy at length got far enough in advance to halt and build somewhat substantial barricades across the road. Without hesitation, Wheeler hurled his little force against the obstruction; the defenders fled. In the

running fight that ensued the pursuers captured 200 prisoners, mounted and armed.

General McCook and the remainder of his command, more than three times Wheeler's strength, was ahead two miles. The course of the flight and pursuit was toward Newnan, a village on the Atlanta and West Point railroad. The road was dotted with broken-down men and horses of the foe. Two miles from Newnan Wheeler caught up, fought and captured 20 prisoners.

General Jackson had set out to assist Wheeler at the start, but did not catch up. General Ross, of Jackson's command, and Colonel Cook also, now came up with some 200 men.

When the enemy came in sight of Newnan they saw Confederate troops there, Roddey's men, dismounted, guards to a hospital. From sight of Roddey they turned suddenly, leaving the town on a by-road, well to their right, intending to reënter the main road about two miles away. Wheeler dispatched Colonel Ashby, with about half his force at full gallop, straight through the streets of Newnan to strike the head of the enemy's column as it debouched again upon the main road. With the remainder he followed the enemy on parallel lines, keeping himself between their column and Ashby. McCook discovered Ashby, at the mouth of the by-road, awaiting him. He halted and formed line of battle in the woods. Wheeler came up, charged the halted line and was repulsed. Ashby attacked, and by this time Wheeler re-formed his men and joined in Ashby's battle. McCook's force broke and fled in utmost confusion. Wheeler's reunited force was in hot pursuit when he heard firing behind him. It appears that a body of McCook's men had fallen out of the march some hours before, and, endeavoring to catch up, had come upon General Ross' held horses on the east side of Newnan and had attacked the guards. Wheeler recalled the pursuit of McCook and, returning, released all of Ross' horses and captured Confederates, capturing, in turn, the men who had effected the contretemps, also their horses.

McCook did not retreat farther. When he found no

pursuers, he took position to fight. Wheeler, with Ross' horses in charge, returned. Anderson's brigade, or what was left of it, now came up and the firing began in spirited fashion. Anderson, however, was struck in the arm and disabled, as he formed line to renew the fight, and Colonel Bird succeeded to the command of the brigade.

The sultry summer day was spent and the enemy was yet retreating. In the darkness they came to a deep ravine. They barricaded the edge opposite Wheeler, and placed their line in the ravine, behind the barricade. Advance upon them was thus prevented. Wheeler rapidly moved, mounted, upon the flank and the foe fled, leaving behind two entire regiments and all the Confederate prisoners taken from the hospitals and storehouses. Somewhere, among Confederate stores, they had found some boxes of Confederate currency. They opened these and strewed the ground with "the new issue." The Confederates called it "a cloud-burst of money."

It was now July 30th. General Jackson came up in person, but without a command. Wheeler had called on Roddey, at Newnan, to follow Ashby, but the hot and dusty road, six miles, was too much for dismounted troopers, and Roddey failed to bring relief.

Colonel McKenzie was sent forward that night to scour the country for fugitives from the battlefield. Colonel Bird, with Anderson's brigade, was ordered to pursue McCook and capture him on the Chattahooche bank. There is a limit to human endurance. Wheeler says: "It was full daylight before I heard from him at all, and then I heard he had let the demoralized mass escape to the river." The general, who seemed never to sleep, complained that his colonel had slept! Wheeler rode on, crossed the Chattahooche after McCook and captured a few prisoners, but soon returned to the south side again.

Here ended the gallop of seventy miles.

We now return to observe Iverson, in pursuit of Stoneman. Stoneman never reached Macon. General Howell Cobb, of the Georgia state troops, was there without a

command. News came of the approach of the enemy. Cobb hastened to collect the fowling pieces from private residences and whatever other arms and ammunition he could find. He called for volunteers from the Confederate offices and shops, from among the old men and boys. It so happened that Georgia reserves had been called to Atlanta and several hundred of these, whose officers were in the ranks of Hood's army, had reached Macon on their way unofficered. Cobb got the men together, appointed the officers, distributed the arms and led them out two or three miles to meet Stoneman. General Johnston mounted his bay and rode to the field, a spectator. Stoneman attacked; denounced his Kentuckians, saying they would not fight, and escaped with some 500 followers. He was met twenty miles away by Iverson, in pursuit, and captured. Several hundred of his men ran, pell-mell, up the road and in their flight rushed upon a frail bridge. The bridge broke. Colonel W. C. P. Breckinridge was in command of the pursuing party, and among the captives at the bridge was his brother, an officer in Stoneman's command. The brothers were allowed to sleep together and talk over their experiences that night.

One of Stoneman's regiments or a considerable part of one, stampeded to escape capture. In a wild rush they struck across country, dashing through a heavy pine thicket where nothing could be seen twenty feet ahead. Those riding in the van came precipitately upon a wash-out, or gully, between twelve and fifteen feet in width and eight feet deep, impassable to tired horses. The leading riders, with their horses, were pushed into this gully; they filled it, piled on one another. Those in the rear rode their horses upon those who had fallen and so passed over. Dead men's clothes and flesh were horribly cut by the iron shoes of the horses as they dashed on.⁸

When the weary troopers from a most memorable and desperate expedition gathered again in bivouac, General Wheeler issued the following congratulatory order:

⁸W. C. Dodson in *Confederate Veteran*, March, 1911.

"NEAR ATLANTA, GA.,

"Aug. 5, 1864.

"Soldiers: The major-general commanding thanks his command for the energy and determined gallantry displayed in their recent operations. The foiling of a most stupendous effort on the part of the enemy to destroy our country is due to your valor and patriotism.

"During the present campaign you have captured or killed a number of the enemy equal to your own strength. You have defeated him in every action in which you have engaged, capturing his cannon, colors and arms. Your great commander, General Hood, appreciates your services. Stand together, my brave soldiers, continue your good conduct, and the lasting gratitude of your country will be your reward.

"JOSEPH WHEELER,

"Major-General."

General Sherman's new war method of raid had fallen miserably. He wrote home to his government of his deep mortification. He now turned his attention to his main army to circumvent Atlanta. We shall see that General Hood lost his head. He put out his eyes and stopped his ears by sending his cavalry hundreds of miles away on a raid.

CHAPTER XVII

1864

WHEELER'S LAST RAID

The energies of the campaign were tremendous. The situation at Atlanta presents the great war in its severest tension. The Confederate government had no military scheme except the impracticable defense of Richmond. Lee at Petersburg, and Hood at Atlanta, were equally dedicated to the one impossible task, the defense of Richmond.

Sherman, following Johnston through northern Georgia, had not, up to July 17th, seriously threatened Richmond. He had not wandered twenty miles from the Chattanooga railroad. He could not wander twenty miles on either side of a direct course, following Johnston. He could not turn back.

The fall of Atlanta, without the destruction of Johnston's army, would not endanger Richmond. The base of General Lee in Alabama and southeast Georgia was connected with Richmond by railroads running through Macon. Johnston had no idea of permitting the fall of Macon.

Having completed the wonderful dispersion or capture or destruction of the three great raiding parties, 9500 picked cavalry, General Wheeler went into camp, without shelter, near Covington, there to rest a few days, the "rest" a mockery. The quartermaster had no corn nor oats. The plantations had long since been depleted of everything in the barns.

War had become habit with the troops. The women, boys and old men, left at home, expected the enemy and when the enemy came endured with resolution their share of the sacrifices of the mighty struggle. "I went into a corn-field," wrote a trooper resting, "gathered twelve ears

from the growing stalk, in the milk; gave my horse eight and kept four to roast for my dinner. I took two from him to help my dinner, but gave him the shucks from all, so I claimed to have been generous."

Wheeler's "rest" had a motive, at army headquarters. General Hood found that, after eighteen days of ceaseless effort, General Sherman had failed to break through the fortifications of Atlanta. Sherman again sent Garrard to destroy the railroad to Macon and received from him a spirited report of what he had accomplished; but the next day, he says, he could see the smoke from the Confederate engines running the whole length of the broken track. At the same time he sent Kilpatrick out upon the Atlanta and West Point railroad, where much damage was done. The raids were intended to starve the garrison of Atlanta and its population of old men and women and children. Hood conceived the idea of starving Sherman, with inadequate information of Sherman's source of supplies.

August 10th General Wheeler led 4000 scantily equipped men out from the camps at Covington, across the Chattahoochee, under orders to destroy the railroad between the river and Dalton and burn the army stores; then cross the Tennessee, destroy the railroad to Murfreesboro and burn the stores. A long, terrible ride for tired men and poor horses! Sherman heard of the expedition when it was a day out, but felt small apprehensions of harm. His railroad repair corps, ready with cars, engines, ties and rails, were able to restore faster than Wheeler could destroy.

Preparatory to this raid General Wheeler issued the following order:

"II. In the march about to commence, no soldier or officer of any grade whatever will be permitted to carry any article of private property, except one single blanket and one oilcloth.

"The troops will be inspected daily when en route and any additional article found upon the person or horse of any trooper will be destroyed.

"III. The ordnance wagons, limber boxes, ambulances

and caissons will be inspected twice each day, and the officer controlling them will be arrested, and if practicable immediately punished, if the smallest article of private property is found being thus transported."

The expedition was a grave military blunder. The conditions were all against practical results. The reduction of strength of the army at Atlanta by 4000 cavalry was in disastrous misconception of the prospects of the besieger. Sherman laughed.

The forenoon of August 11th General Wheeler destroyed several miles of railroad track at Marietta. Brigadier-General Hannon, farther up the road, captured a train of army wagons, dispersed the guard and drove off, back to Atlanta, 1700 beeves, fighting off the enemy that followed.

The horses, fed continually and solely on tender green corn, grew more feeble. General Martin was sent by a shorter route to capture a small force at Tilton, with orders to rejoin the main column at Dalton. Meantime, General Wheeler proceeded through Cassville and Calhoun, working what damage he could on the way. With Kelly's and Humes' divisions he entered Dalton, driving the negro troops found there to a near-by fort, on a commanding position. Here the Confederates found sufficient stores to feed themselves,—among other things, the first canned milk they had ever seen,—but were sorely distressed to find no grain for their horses. The day was spent in destroying the railroad, and the work continued into the night. Martin came within seven miles and then went into camp; he did not reach Wheeler at Dalton. When he did come up, he was put under arrest and sent back to army lines. He never served in the Army of Tennessee again.

Three days were spent in making demonstrations, alternately upon Chattanooga and Dalton. Wheeler then turned his face toward the Tennessee. He left small squads of trusty men to throw cars off the track, or in any ingenious way to interrupt the use of the railroad. Nothing more substantial had thus far been accomplished than the capture and safe removal of the large herd of beeves. High waters compelled the column to ride north, beyond Knoxville, in

order to get into middle Tennessee. Some miles of railroad track between Cleveland and Loudon were destroyed. At one point on the Little Tennessee some much needed rations were captured. Some cavalry at Knoxville came out to give battle, lost 100 in killed and wounded and returned. The crossings of the Holston were resisted, but unsuccessfully. After the fight with the Knoxville cavalry, Brigadier-General John S. Williams, "Cerro Gordo Williams," was sent by Wheeler to take two of the four brigades and two of the four pieces of artillery to Strawberry Plains, to capture the garrison there, rather than leave it in the rear. Williams was expected to do his work and overtake Wheeler that night. Williams, however, finding Strawberry Plains too strong for him, crossed the Holston with difficulty, and set out to overtake Wheeler. Wheeler did not wait long enough in camp, so the detached brigades and two guns never reached him.

General Wheeler, in his official report, describes his adventures after losing Williams' own brigade and Anderson's, commanded by General Felix Robertson, the wound received by the former officer at Newnan yet restraining him from the field: "After crossing the river and mountains, I destroyed the railroad at various points between Chattanooga and Nashville. Captured two trains of cars and a number of small depots of stores, including McMinnville, and caused the abandonment of several posts, all the stores connected therewith being destroyed. We captured several stockades or blockhouses and destroyed bridges and the railroad to such an extent as completely to stop communication for fifteen days."

General Rousseau now rode out from Nashville, on news of the approach of the raiders at the head of a force of infantry, artillery and cavalry. Wheeler gave battle, captured the enemy's artillery, two stands of colors, thirty wagons and their teams, also some prisoners, and drove them two miles in utter rout. Approach to within eight miles of Nashville was made. No thought of attacking the place, with two small field-pieces and a force of cavalry less than three thousand strong, was entertained. For

nearly three years the position had been uninterruptedly in the hands of the enemy, as a base, and was thoroughly fortified.

The course was now taken due south, to strike the Nashville and Decatur railroad. Rousseau, Croxton, Steedman and Granger, from different directions, were in pursuit. At Franklin, Lynnville, Campbellville and other points on the road the enemy were repulsed and progress made. At the inconsequential affair at Franklin fell the noble young Kelly, now major-general. "Among the many officers of rank under whom I served, General Kelly stands out to memory the ideal cavalry commander. A young man of slight figure, fair complexion, light hair and moustache, a superb horseman, from the training school at West Point, nothing in man could be more inspiring than his presence on the field, with the enemy in front. He dashed down his line like a ray of light. In ringing, yet melodious, tones that none could imitate he shouted to his engaged men, 'Aim low and strike hard,' or, in the turmoil of the charge, 'Rally on your colors,' or oftener, 'Rally on your commander, my men!'"

General Wheeler's report of the raid said of Kelly's loss: "No honors bestowed on his memory could more than repay his devotion." General Wheeler issued the following appeal:

"HEADQUARTERS IN THE FIELD,
"August 30, 1864.

"Tennesseans:

"Confederate troops again press the soil of your native state. The opportunity for which you so long asked is now given you. The brave men who in the hour of your country's peril still cling to your country's standard, appeal to you for aid. Shall they call in vain?

"Georgia has called her last available citizen between the ages of seventeen and fifty. They are now fighting beside your chivalrous sons at Atlanta. Other states are now throwing their entire male population into the field. Citizens of Tennessee! You also have been always ready to respond to your country's call; every one of you must rise to duty.

If all who should come will now join us, we pledge the honor of those states whose sons compose the western army of the Confederacy that Tennessee shall be redeemed.

"J. WHEELER,
"Major-General."

The raid was now practically over. Wheeler had with him some 2000 recruits for his own force and 800 absentees to return to other commands in the Army of Tennessee. An interesting feature of his report was the postscript: "During the period embraced in this report, which records such brilliant and continued successes and such large captures of prisoners, cannon, colors, arms and all kinds of materials, on no occasion did my command, as far as I could learn, have a single man or any material whatever captured by the enemy in action."

Arrived at Tuscumbia, Alabama, General Wheeler wrote, September 17th, to General Hood his recommendation of immediate action. He would go into camp on the border of Alabama, rest men and horses, organize recruits and prepare to reënter Tennessee. "If permitted," he wrote, "to carry out this, I feel certain I can keep Sherman's railroad communications constantly broken between Nashville and Chattanooga." The application was refused. Wheeler went to see Forrest, in reach. The two concurred in the opinion that their joint work should be upon Sherman's railroad connections. September 20th Wheeler wrote again to General Hood, giving the result of the conference with Forrest. On the 21st he received this reply: "General Hood directs that you join the left of this army without delay."

We recur for a moment to General Williams. He rode on, in vain hope of overtaking Wheeler or receiving orders where to rejoin him. He had no ammunition wagons and only a short supply for his men and for his two guns. Having crossed the swollen Holston with great difficulty, he passed over the mountains and debouched upon the plain near Murfreesboro, where Wheeler had preceded him. He occupied some hours there in destroying the railroad in the vicinity. The enemy's cavalry came from the town and fol-

lowed him closely. At four o'clock in the afternoon General Robertson found his men retreating in disorder, their ammunition entirely exhausted. Up the pike, a Kentucky regiment was seen advancing at full gallop. What could be done? Captain Miller, of the 8th Confederate, had forty men with a few cartridges left for their pistols. Robertson's horse had been abandoned and he now sat upon a fiery little black mule. He was a knightly young soldier. "Will you follow me?" he called out to the forty. "We'll be with you, general!" rang out from every throat. The Kentuckians, at full speed, were now within one hundred and fifty yards of the one Confederate gun in the road. A shell from it "bunched up" the file leaders. Robertson shot forward on his little mule, the forty behind him. The *mêlée* was hot and short. The lieutenant-colonel, leading the foe, fell at Robertson's own hand. The too confident foe fled, and from their cast-off stock the Confederates gathered a goodly supply of cartridges. Here Williams finally abandoned the attempt to overtake the main body. The road back brought him through Shelbyville, where from the enemy's stores he supplied his men with shoes, hats, clothing, horseshoes,—all sadly needed. All that could not be removed he burned. For six days, resting at no time longer than three hours, the men had marched. Many of them dropped their arms in sleep, as they rode their horses. Skirting the Cumberland range the command came to Greenville, in east Tennessee, where they rested for some days. While there a runner came, bringing information from eastern Kentucky that General Burbridge, with a mounted force, was in rapid march upon the government salt-works in southwestern Virginia. Burbridge went into camp, four miles from the works, on the night of October 1st. Williams, riding hard, got to Saltville at two o'clock that same night and by sunrise was in line of battle. Besides his own troops, he had aroused and gotten into line every available man and boy in the place and put them under command of Colonel Prather, of the 8th Confederate. That regiment, under command of Captain Miller, was held, mounted. Williams, having supplied his ammunition at Greenville, now put the

two guns on the summit of an eminence in front, and placed three guns, found at the works, on an elevation on the flank of the foe. Although Burbridge advanced gallantly, the five guns played upon him and routed him. Williams, with his troops, now marched through western North Carolina and South Carolina to Gadsden, Alabama. He never again appeared in Wheeler's cavalry.

As this last raid practically severed General Wheeler's connection with the Army of Tennessee for several months, and until a few weeks before the capitulation of that army, his own statement of services rendered by his command from May 6th to September 20th, 1864, is given:

"During the time embraced in this report my command has averaged twenty-five miles a day in direct marching, either swam or forded twenty-seven rivers and captured, killed or wounded three times the greatest effective strength it has ever been able to carry into action. Besides, it has captured and turned over to the government an amount of property of more value than the entire expense of my command to the Confederate States."

CHAPTER XVIII

1864

THE DESTRUCTION OF THE ARMY

The cavalry, with Wheeler, gone far away, General Sherman concentrated his army at Jonesboro, on the Atlanta and Macon road, without opposition and without the knowledge of General Hood.

Hood kept Stewart and his corps at Atlanta. He sent Hardee to Jonesboro, thirty miles from Atlanta, with Lee's (once Hood's) corps, and with Hardee's, now commanded by Cleburne. Hardee knew that Hood believed Sherman had begun a retreat across the Chattahooche because Wheeler had cut his railroad connection with Chattanooga and farther on, toward Nashville, and that there was only a small force at Jonesboro. So Hardee called for Hood to come to take command and fight his own battle. General Hood did not respond, but waited in Atlanta, although the railroad was open.

The enemy, about five to one, had built breastworks. Hardee ordered Cleburne to turn the enemy's right and ordered Lee to attack straight, when he heard Cleburne, fully engaged. Lee was a fighter. Mistaking the noise of skirmishers for a main attack, he assailed the foe behind his works before Cleburne could make the contemplated movement. He was badly handled.

The battle was bloody and useless. It is known as the battle of Jonesboro, fought August 31st. September 1st Hardee was at Jonesboro with his old corps, fronting all of Sherman's army, except a small part left to keep Hood in Atlanta. Stewart's corps was in Atlanta and Lee's corps was on the road returning to Atlanta.

General Hood evacuated Atlanta, destroying a large quantity of ammunition, on the afternoon of September 1st,

and concentrated his army at Palmetto station, on the Atlanta and West Point railroad.

Hardee telegraphed to the president from Lovejoy station: "Never before were our liberties in such danger. What can you do for us?"

The president came in person. He paused at Macon long enough to deliver a fierce invective against General Johnston, who was yet at that point, and against Governor Brown, who had desired that this general be retained in command.¹

The president said General Hood would make certain movements that would redeem all the ground Johnston had lost. The newspapers published the remarkable speech delivered at Macon and the Yankees were greatly pleased. They were thus informed and forewarned; they knew the mind of the Confederate government.

The president went to the army at Palmetto station. General Hood loaned him a horse and rode with him around the camps. The troops were drawn up to receive him as he passed. The resentment was general. When the president was about to pass Colonel Dedman's Alabama regiment, word passed among the men that he should be called on to restore General Johnston. Dedman, hearing of it, walked down the line and insisted that silence should prevail. Other troops, nevertheless, did call to him: "Give us Johnston!"² That night a band of music, accompanied by the Louisiana brigade, serenaded him. He made a speech, predicting Hood's success. He said McClellan would defeat Lincoln at the November election, and that the United States would be divided, the west holding to one candidate and the east to the other. Thus the war would end and the Confederacy would live.

The president went on to Mississippi, spoke to the Gen-

¹General Johnston had confined himself closely to his rooms in Macon. After some weeks, he walked to the Episcopal church services Sunday morning. As he rose to leave his pew, the congregation stood while he passed out. The wife of Senator C. C. Clay, of Alabama, met him at the church door and printed a kiss on his forehead.

²Hood's Account.

eral Assembly glowing words of confidence, and came back to Alabama to speak in the same tone to the same body of that state. He seemed to be entirely oblivious of Hood's misfortunes arising from his incompetency. He seemed to think that if the enemy would give Hood a chance to fight the whole interest of the cause would prosper.³

Pausing in Montgomery, on his return trip from Mississippi, the president met there his brother-in-law and confidential friend, one of the great soldiers of the Confederacy, Lieutenant-General Richard Taylor. The moment certain formalities of the evening, incumbent for observance upon his office, were closed, he invited General Taylor to his private room, turned the key and entered upon the conference that consumed all the remainder of the night. General Taylor had traveled incognito in Mississippi and Alabama. "I found," he said, "citizens universally depressed and disheartened. Sick and wounded officers and men from Hood's army were dissatisfied with the removal of Johnston from command and the subsequent conduct of affairs. From conversations in railway carriages and on river steamers, I gathered this, and nothing but this, since my arrival"⁴—from trans-Mississippi.

Combative in the extreme, resentful always of opinions of others when they happened not to agree with his own, the president received this revelation of the affairs of the country with expressions of surprise but with no abatement of his purpose. He would fight it out. Could not General Taylor bring reinforcements from beyond the Mississippi? None. Over there despondency was in the air. The talk was to negotiate with the Emperor of France for terms on which to make alliance with Maximilian and annex Mexico.

Governor Brown, of Georgia, Toombs and Stephens were

³On his way to Mississippi Mr. Davis passed a point, Marion Junction, fifteen miles west of Selma. Two railroads crossed each other there, and in the war time crowds of soldiers, wounded or on furlough collected on the platform with the general travelling public. It was crowded when the president came out on the platform of his car, took off his hat and bowed low. There was no response whatever. Several times he bowed without the least notice being taken of him.

⁴*Destruction and Reconstruction*, 204.

bitter against the president. The threat was made that Georgia would summon another Constitutional Convention, recall her citizens from the army and suspend relations with the Richmond government. William Gilmore Simms, editorial writer for the Charleston (S. C.) *Mercury* was also very bitter against the president. General Howell Cobb, of Georgia, wrote as follows to Mr. Davis expressing his anxiety:

"Let me say to you, in candor and frankness, the opposition to your administration has been so general that you know not who to look upon as a friend and supporter. But, Mr. President, there are things that you can do and which I again urge and press you to do. First, respond to the urgent and overwhelming public feeling in favor of the restoration of General Johnston. I assure you your refusal to do this is doing you more harm and producing more opposition to your administration than you dream of. Better that you put him in command, admitting him to be as deficient in the qualities of a general as you or any one else may suppose, than to resist a public sentiment which is weakening your strength and destroying your powers of usefulness."⁵

In reply to these solicitations and the resolutions of Congress calling for the restoration of General Johnston, the president signed the document known as the "Unsent Message," in which he conveyed the information to Congress that he would never give command to General Johnston again.

After the war Colonel J. S. Kennard, representing General Johnston, made personal application to the president for a copy. The president expressed surprise, declaring he did not remember such a document. He wrote direct to Johnston, denying the authorship.⁶ It is probable that the president did not write the paper. It is a very brilliant and logical statement of his case against Johnston, in stronger style than the president was wont to employ. He signed it,

⁵Off. War Rec. Series I, vol. liii, p. 394.

⁶Kennard's Letter to the Author; Johnston's Narrative.

perhaps, on the recommendation of the great lawyer who probably wrote it.⁷

Hardee could no longer be kept under Hood, so he was transferred to Charleston, and Beauregard, on General Taylor's suggestion, was called to Alabama. Taylor's advice was to place Beauregard in command of the Army of Tennessee. Thereupon the president wrote a semi-apologetic letter to Hood that Beauregard would be brought to a new department, including Taylor and himself. Hood, of course, would be pleased to confer with so distinguished a superior. In fact, Beauregard found he had been placed in the same nondescript relation to Taylor and Hood that Johnston, two years before, had borne toward Bragg and Pemberton; there was nothing for him to do. Taylor, in good faith, had suggested him as the commander (next to Johnston, whom he preferred but dared not propose) most acceptable to the troops and the people, making the counsel with extreme reluctance as a *dernier ressort*.

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We shall break the chronological order of events to follow Hood to the end and then restore the narrative to the movements of General Sherman and General Wheeler, not involved in his campaign.

General Hood left Sherman behind him in Atlanta. He marched from Palmetto toward Chattanooga, the design being to draw Sherman back on the old line of Johnston's campaign and "whip him to a frazzle," where Johnston, with double the force now remaining, had retreated before him. When Hood got off on his march as far as Dallas, about thirty miles, he detached Stewart's corps to destroy property of the enemy along the railroad. He ordered that French's division of Stewart's corps should separate from the others and, marching to the Alatoona railroad, cut, to "fill it."⁸ French marched two days and a night with very little time to rest. When he approached Ala-

⁷See Off. War Records for the document in full.

⁸French's Two Wars.

toona, two young ladies who were just from the place informed him of the several lines of fortifications that crowned the hills, and of enormous quantities of supplies the enemy had under protection of the works. French had not been informed of the fullness of his task. He attacked the works, carried the first line and expected to capture the whole, when Sherman, who had set out from Atlanta to overtake Hood, signalled over his head to the garrison, "Hold the fort; Sherman comes."⁹ French had fought desperately and a bloody field was beneath him, but when he discovered that his single division was between the garrison and Sherman's advancing army, he withdrew and rejoined Hood.

Hood marched on, captured Dalton, and on to La Fayette, thirty miles south. While he lay at La Fayette, Sherman arrived at Resaca and took position at Snake Creek Gap, five miles farther. Hood had about 25,000, infantry and artillery, left from his defense of Atlanta. He knew Sherman lay among the mountains with 65,000. He intended to bring on a general engagement there, nothing doubting that the result would open his way to the interior of Ohio. Some sinister suggestion prevailed to cause him to seek to discover, first, whether the fragment of the army remaining had sufficiently recovered its tone from the demoralization of Johnston's methods to justify a fight. He decided, upon information, not to fight.¹⁰ The army, of course, was cognizant of the commander's state of mind toward it.

Taylor had proposed that the Army of Tennessee, under Beauregard, take position at Blue Mountain, the terminus of the railroad from Selma into the coal fields, near the present new city, Anniston. If Sherman followed, fight him; if he did not follow, use the army to destroy and keep unavailable to him the Chattanooga and Atlanta railroad.

Sherman remained on the railroad near Snake Creek Gap. He said if he started out to overtake Hood he could never catch him. He sent Thomas to Nashville and Scho-

⁹This incident is the origin of the religious revival song, "Hold the Fort."

¹⁰Hood's Advance and Retreat.

field to Decatur, Atlanta, and Decherd. He returned to Atlanta.

This remnant of the Army of Tennessee now started for Ohio. After conquering that region, it would strike Grant in Virginia, in the rear, and thus fix the Confederacy securely in the family of nations.¹¹ To be specific and authoritative, the decision of General Hood was, to leave Sherman at Rome, Georgia, to march through northern Alabama to Guntersville, cross the Tennessee at that point, brush Schofield away, who stood across that line of march, capture Nashville, capture or disperse the 40,000 garrison under Thomas, behind fortifications long built there, march thence to Richmond, Kentucky, winter his army in the blue-grass, and when spring came, march through Ohio, coming back upon the rear of Grant at City Point, and thus establish the independence of the Confederacy.¹²

Forrest was detained by high waters. Hood must have him along with his marches. So, instead of crossing at Guntersville, he continued his march, passing that part of Schofield's men entrenched at Decatur with only demonstration enough to keep them from molesting his troops en route. The president disapproved, but seemed to be dazed.

On November 21st, in cold rain, General Hood started from Florence, Alabama, with less than 30,000 troops. His plan was to recruit heavily in middle Tennessee, and yet move in Kentucky, as he passed along, marching to the rear of Grant in eastern Virginia. No recruits enlisted.

On the direct march from Florence to Nashville, his first objective, General Hood must pass through, or near, these four points, from south to north, in the order named here: Pulaski, Columbia, Spring Hill and Franklin. He aimed to flank Pulaski and put himself between Columbia and Schofield at Pulaski. His first movement came within an hour of success. Complete success would have attended him but for rain, sleet and alternately miry and frozen roads, over which the field-piece carriages had to be dragged at times by soldiers. The progress was of course very slow.

¹¹Hood's Advance and Retreat.

¹²Ibid.

Schofield got to Columbia while the head of Hood's column was in sight, approaching. Works had been thrown up there by the enemy. Hood demonstrated, but that night secretly threw a pontoon bridge across Duck river, three miles above the town.

Soon after daylight, next day, November 29th, Hood, at the head of Hardee's old corps, now under Major-General Cheatham, crossed that bridge. Stewart followed. Lee remained before Columbia, cannonading all the time, deceiving Schofield, who also remained.

Hood passed well on to Spring Hill before Schofield discovered the ruse. Schofield thus foiled, started, hoping to elude Lee and slip by Hood with the other two corps, thus reaching Nashville, and Thomas, there awaiting him.

Hood, with the corps of Stewart and Cheatham, passed on to the village of Spring Hill, in the middle afternoon of the 29th. Schofield had two divisions there and some fighting took place. Hood halted for the night on hills alongside the road to Franklin. He rode to the top of an eminence overlooking that road and saw it filled with Schofield's wagons and men in the distance. With him were Cheatham and the most distinguished of the division commanders of Cheatham's corps,—Major-General Patrick Cleburne. He pointed out the road under him, upon which Schofield must march that night on his way to Nashville, and gave Cheatham, in the hearing of Cleburne, specific instructions to block the road and arrest the enemy.¹³ Hood and Governor Isham G. Harris then went to share the same bed, in a farmhouse near by¹⁴ which also sheltered General James R. Chalmers and others. Cheatham failed to block the road. On the night of the 29th, escaping from Lee on his rear, Schofield marched his whole army and train through Hood's bivouac; "lit their pipes at our camp fires," the soldiers put it. Hood was very indignant, blaming Cheatham. The general commanding was, indeed, greatly humiliated in his

¹³Hood's Advance and Retreat.

¹⁴Two Wars, 291.

own esteem, knowing that the failure was due wholly to his own neglect.

FRANKLIN

French's division led off at dawn toward Franklin. The Harpeth river runs by, north of the town. Schofield, who was much needed by Thomas at Nashville, had orders to hasten on and was anxious to obey. The crossing of the Harpeth with a train fourteen miles long, and with Hood on his heels, must be avoided. He threw up works on a large open field immediately south of the town limits, and also other works on the hills across the river, commanding the open field over the heads of an attacking party. The works, on both sides of the river, were then manned. Hood had flanked Resaca without fighting; he next flanked Decatur, Alabama. Three days before he had flanked Columbia with marked success. Why would he not flank Franklin? Schofield could gain nothing by a battle fought while he was due at Nashville. Schofield expected Hood to flank him as soon as he discovered the fortifications, impregnable to him, across his way to Nashville. Hood remarked to some of his officers, while getting into line, that he had received captured dispatches that required him to fight. What their nature no one knew then. When finally acknowledged, they were worthless. Having put his train over the river, it was Schofield's purpose to vacate his works that night and put the troops left behind them on the march to Nashville.¹⁵

"Why did you fight at Franklin?" was the question put to General French, C. S. A., by General T. J. Wood, U. S. A., at Washington city six months after the battle. Wood said the officers had all assembled at General Schofield's headquarters, across the Harpeth, to receive final orders to vacate the works and resume the march for Nashville, twenty miles away, when to their astonishment a cannon shot was heard.¹⁶ It will be well to remember that the artillery of the army had been left with General S. D. Lee, to

¹⁵Confederate Veteran, August, 1909.

¹⁶French's Two Wars, 298.

cannonade Schofield at Columbia, while the other troops flanked him. Except two pieces, engaged at Franklin, none had arrived.

The army was placed in line of battle on Carter's hill, overlooking the plain between there and Winstead hill, where the enemy's works stood in front of Franklin. General Cheatham rode to the front, examining the ground, and remarked, semi-jocosely: "I don't like the looks of Winstead hill!"

General Govan accosted General Cleburne: "General, many of us will not get back to Arkansas." "We can die like men," quoth Cleburne. The plain was more than two miles deep, and over this the army must move, under fire for a large part of the way from Schofield's long-range artillery from both sides of the river. General Hood had been elevated to command to charge fortifications. He had already lost two-thirds of the army he had received, July 17th, at Atlanta, charging fortifications. He charged for the last time this day, November 30th.

The line of battle stood in semicircle form corresponding to the line of the enemy's works in front of the town. The town lay in the bend of the river.

The enemy's works were built across that bend, touching the river bank at both ends. Stewart's corps was formed, his right on the bank of the Harpeth. Cheatham joined Stewart's left. Lee had not come up from Columbia and the Confederate line did not cover more than half the length of the works. Across the river, very near the bank and opposite the entrenchments named, there was a shorter line of works, mounted with cannon. The enemy had 25,420 men behind their works on Winstead's hill, with full complement of field-pieces.

On Carter's hill, two and a half miles south, General Hood had ready for action 21,847 men in the two corps, with a small part of Lee's corps and the small brigade of Texans under Ector. To guard each flank, Forrest was on the field with his cavalry. Just before the signal to advance was given, Stewart sat his horse with staff and couriers, at the end of his line. Forrest dashed up, his face red as

an Indian's in his excitement. He exclaimed earnestly to Stewart:

"General, the Yankees are not ready. They are working on their front lines of breastworks and their guns are stacked behind them. Give me a division of your infantry and I will take all my men and rush in behind them and cut them off from their main works."

Stewart replied, calmly: "General Forrest, I am put where you find me by General Hood, with orders to move upon these works. You must see him to get any help from me." With tears streaming down his cheeks, as was usual in his greatest excitement, Forrest touched spurs to his horse and dashed away.¹⁷

General Hood's line of battle, from right to left, stood as follows, by divisions: Loring, Walthall, French, Cleburne, Brown, Bate, six in all.

The time was one hour before sunset, the day fair. "The winds were in their caves; the silence that precedes the storm was felt; the calm before the earthquake, which by some law of nature forewarns fowls to seek the fields, birds to fly away and cattle to run to the hills, seemed to presage an impending calamity. . . . Twenty thousand gallant Confederates, banners floating, at the word moved proudly over the open plain. It was a glorious and imposing sight, and one seldom witnessed, as all were in full view.

It was only the work of a few minutes to crush the outer line, and when it broke and tried to gain the main works, they were so closely followed by our men that friends and foe, pursuer and pursued, in one mass, rushed over the parapet into the town. During this time the fire from the enemy on his part of the line ceased, so as to admit their own troops. But the Confederates now inside were confronted with a reserve force and either killed or captured. . . .

I could see only beneath the cloud of smoke an incessant sheet of flame rolling on the ground, in which the combatants flitted about like the pictures of demons in Tophet. The

¹⁷Nicholas Williams DuBose, a lad courier to General Stewart, sat near his commander and heard all that passed between the two generals. He supplied the facts of this incident.

shock was too violent to last. Its force was soon spent. The fire slackened, and as the smoke was wafted away in fragments, the sight was appalling! What a ghastly scene in front of the gin house! The dead and wounded visible for a moment, only to be again enveloped in the cloud of battle beneath which the Angel of Death again garnered in harvest. 'On! On!' 'Forward! Forward!' was the resounding cry. It was death to stop and safety was found, in a measure, in the ditch beneath the parapet."

When the Confederates tried to re-form on the neighboring hills, the enemy's artillery from across the river opened over the heads of their own troops upon them.

Brigadier-General Sears, of French's division, fell back with some orders. Brigadier-General Cockrell's Missourians were nearly all gone and their commander bleeding from wounds. Colonel Gates, of the same division, rode out with his bridle reins between his teeth, both hands disabled by shot. General Walthall rode up to speak to an officer, and while in the act, his horse reared and fell dead. General Cleburne's horse fell dead. A courier gave up his to the general, but before he could mount, the second horse fell dead. Waving his sword on foot, Cleburne fell dead.

The army was wrecked. Twelve generals killed, wounded and captured, thirty-six per cent of the infantry killed and wounded—a battle absolutely uncalled for!

The unanimous opinion of the participants seems to have been that the commanding general resorted to the battle in rash effort to retrieve his own glaring fault of the night before on Spring Hill pike. He need not have fought there to have defeated Schofield. Harpeth river was fordable on almost every road. He might have flanked Schofield with perfect security and occupied the Brentwood hills between Franklin and Nashville.¹⁸

The casualties in the rank of general were: Major-General Patrick R. Cleburne, killed, and John C. Brown, wounded; Brigadier-Generals H. B. Granberry, S. R. Gist, John Adams and O. F. Strahl, killed, John C. Carter, mortally wounded; F. M. Cockrell, A. M. Manigault, William

¹⁸Lieutenant-General Stewart, in *Confederate Veteran*, Sept., 1908.

A. Quarles and T. M. Scott, wounded. Brigadier-General George W. Gordon was captured.

Narrators, comparing this field of Franklin with the charge at Gettysburg, show that the ground passed over at Franklin to the enemy's works was two and a quarter miles, at Gettysburg, sixteen hundred yards; that the aggregate number of bayonets at Franklin was 15,551; at Gettysburg, 15,511; that the works of the enemy at Franklin were complete on both sides of the river; at Gettysburg the only protection to the enemy was a low stone fence, or wall, on a part of the line and piled rails from a fence, on the other part; Pickett's loss was about twenty-one per cent.; Hood's loss thirty-six per cent.¹⁹

General Cleburne attended the marriage of General Hardee, in Marengo county, Alabama, to Miss Mary Forman Lewis, in February, 1864, both coming from the Army of Tennessee, then at Dalton. At the wedding was a distinguished and large company. Among the guests was a young maiden of rare accomplishments and intelligence, Miss Susan Tarleton, daughter of a cotton factor of Mobile. He had never met her before. It was a case of desperate love at first sight. An engagement to marry was then and there made between the two.

General Hood, having lost in number twenty-five per cent. of his army in the battle, besides suffering a ruinous loss of officers of every grade, generals especially, the day after Franklin followed General Schofield on to the suburbs of Nashville. There was not even a remote probability of success. He had gathered no recruits from middle Tennessee, as he had hoped.

The army was drawn up in battle order on the south side of the Cumberland, December 2d. On December 15th General Thomas moved upon each flank. The battle was sharp. No impression was made on the right flank, but the Confederates lost redoubts on their left. Early on the next day, December 16th, the enemy renewed the attack. The

¹⁹Cleburne and His Command, 325.

Confederates fought well until about half-past three in the afternoon, when Bate's division gave way.²⁰

The army was routed; only the want of energy in the enemy saved it from immediate annihilation. Forrest protected the rear with Walthall's infantry. Fifty-four field-pieces were lost, abandoned or captured.

The soldiers, insufficiently clothed, suffered great hardships on the retreat. Many walked without shoes over the frozen roads. When General Hood, after crossing the Tennessee on the 25th of December, went into camp Tupelo, Mississippi, there were no tents.

No army ever encountered a more severe test of fidelity to its cause than this one. A lieutenant of cavalry, writing home from the camp, said he had a half blanket, stretched on four poles, for a tent. Under that poor cover he cooked his ash-cakes of cornmeal, broiled his bacon on the coals, and slept. He had lost his wool hat and was indebted to a citizen on the roadside for an old straw substitute. His shoes were brogans, too large, and he had no overcoat. The army at Tupelo numbered about 15,000, having lost, say, 10,000 by the campaign.²¹ On January 22d General Hood tendered his resignation on the ground of want of public confidence.

The very grotesque report of General Hood is perhaps alone in literature of that description. He says: "It is my firm conviction that, notwithstanding that disaster (Nashville), I left the army in better spirits and more confidence in itself than it had at the opening of the campaign." He received at Atlanta about 65,000 men! This general thought one good he had accomplished was to divide the army of Sherman, that had driven him out of Atlanta, one part having marched to Savannah and the other to Nashville! That each of the *dissecta membra* was larger than his army, he omitted to say. That Wilson's cavalry, preparing to invade Alabama, was twice his army, he omitted to say.

Hood, having turned the army over to Lieutenant-General

²⁰Hood's Report, Off. War Rec., Series I, vol. xlv, Part I, p. 654.

²¹Ibid.

Taylor at Tupelo, went on to Richmond, where he was warmly received by the government and ordered to the command of the trans-Mississippi Department. General Johnston, then unassigned, having seen his report with its comments upon him, informed the government he would at the earliest day prefer charges against him. General Hood, on his way to Richmond, called at the residence of General John S. Preston, at Columbia, South Carolina. Several ladies of the family and their female friends received him hospitably. He referred in a meditative way to his recent military misfortunes, muttering: "It was all my fault!" the perspiration streaming from his face in his agony. He became so dejected and distressed that the ladies left him to himself. I was present in the apartment at Chester, South Carolina, when Mrs. Jefferson Davis, fleeing from Richmond, communicated to General Hood, *vis à vis*, on his way to the trans-Mississippi, his first news of the evacuation of the Confederate capitol. He was profoundly astonished and most sincerely distressed at the report.

CHAPTER XIX

1864

THE MARCH TO THE SEA

November 15th General Sherman mounted his fresh Kentucky-bred horse amidst the ashes of Atlanta. The gay animal pranced his way out to the main road and thence led forward the mightiest host of organized marauders ever beheld by the modern civilized world. Until far into the following year infamous depredations constituted the sole occupation of nearly all that army.

Before he set out, Sherman wrote to Grant: "Until we can repopulate Georgia it is useless for us to occupy it, but the utter destruction of its roads, houses and people will cripple their military resources."¹ This was the animus.

The marching host was accompanied by 35,000 horses and mules. The train contained 2500 four-horse wagons, and was fifteen miles long. The troops were in numbers and arms, as follows: Infantry, 59,796; artillery, 1788; cavalry, 4961; total, 66,545.²

"The March to the Sea" can have no parallel rank with the Dalton-Atlanta campaign in the history of military achievements. No military fame can attach to it. The condition precedent was the winter season, immediately following the harvest of the corn crop and the slaughter of hogs. At any time between April and November supplies were so low along this line of march that Sherman's army could not have lived off the country.

The purpose was, at the outset, to reach Grant, at City Point, by water. Whether to embark his army at Pensa-

¹Memoirs of General Sherman, vol. ii.

²Memoirs of General Sherman.

cola or Savannah was not determined by General Sherman until he reached Milledgeville.

Before completing his arrangements at Atlanta to start, General Sherman considered with anxiety the choice of a leader for his cavalry, that is, his foragers and marauders. Major-General Judson Kilpatrick, a cotemporary of Wheeler's at West Point, was selected for this part, because he possessed the kind of reputation eschewed by modern war and renounced by Christian soldiers, won in Virginia in the early months of the same year. It was Kilpatrick who planned and led a raid upon Richmond in February, 1864, in which he failed, but which became ignobly historic because of the part assigned to young Colonel Dahlgren to enter the city, murder President Davis and the Cabinet and burn the houses. Logan's 15th corps, notorious for acts of brutality, was a part of the infantry.

The Confederacy had no forces of consequence to meet General Sherman. General Wheeler was turned back from the upper part of Georgia, while attached to General Hood's expedition to Tennessee, and General Forrest and his command put in his place.

General Beauregard, at Corinth, having ascertained the movement of Sherman, ordered Wheeler with 4001 men to follow. The Confederate cavalry commander was not to waste his strength defending positions. He was to remove all government property, as far as practicable, and "to consume or destroy all supplies within your (his) reach." Senator Benjamin Hill, having ascertained the course of Sherman, addressed an open letter to the people along the line. He wrote:

"RICHMOND, Nov 18, 1864.

"To the People of Georgia:

"You have now the best opportunity ever offered to destroy the enemy.

"Put everything at the disposal of our generals. Remove all provisions from the path of the invader and put every obstruction in his way.

"Every citizen with his gun and every negro with his spade and ax can do the work of a soldier. You can

destroy the enemy by retarding his march. Georgians, now is your time for action! Strike now and you are free.

"B. H. HILL,
"Senator."

The day Sherman marched out from Atlanta, General Wheeler, preparing to follow him, issued an order revoking General Hood's of October 22d. The substance was: All orders to destroy private property to prevent falling into the hands of the enemy were revoked. No mills should be burned, but the machinery should be disabled. No corn-cribs should be burned. Officers should be sent in advance of the progress of the enemy to notify citizens to drive off their live stock. If owners failed to obey, then the officers present should execute the order.³

The burning of Moscow drove Napoleon's host out of Russia in disgrace. When General Lee, as we shall see presently, ordered Johnston, in North Carolina, to burn all supplies ahead of Sherman, Johnston replied: "I hardly see how it can be done. We are obliged to leave some for the inhabitants." He explained that Sherman would destroy or appropriate all that was thus exempted. Wheeler, with not more than one man in fifteen to the enemy, was fighting his foragers every day, driving them back toward their main column and to that extent relieving the people. If Wheeler had burned corn-cribs, smoke-houses and fodder-stacks, Sherman would have burned every residence and other house within his reach.

General Wheeler fell into Sherman's line of march, behind him, between Atlanta and Milledgeville. No other Confederate troops appeared to oppose the invader. The general condition of this handful of veterans, essaying to play upon the flanks, the rear and the front of a mighty armed host and narrow the swathe it had gone forth to cut through the most prosperous region of Georgia, three hundred and fifty miles long, may be profitably considered. Will T. Martin, John T. Morgan, John S. Williams, W. B. Wade, all good officers, ten to twenty years older than

³Off. War Rec.

Wheeler, all general officers, had finally disappeared by assignment elsewhere. Iverson, of North Carolina, a West Pointer, was the only general officer left to him of superior years to himself. Allen, of Alabama, perhaps his favorite, Humes, Anderson, Robertson, Iverson, Ferguson, whom he did not like, Dibrell, Hannon, Hagan, P. B. M. Young, whom he did not like, were general officers. Brigadier-generals commanded divisions, colonels commanded brigades, captains commanded regiments, greatly to the regret and annoyance of General Wheeler, and against his persistent but vain protests to the War Department. His recommendations for the promotion of officers were strangely disregarded, with the resultant effect that discipline was injured. No wagons accompanied the Confederates. The sole dependence for support of man and horse was the country along the way.

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We will go back to the beginning, to talk of Confederate cavalry arms in the Army of Tennessee and its predecessors. When Wheeler succeeded to command of Chalmer's cavalry at Tupelo, Mississippi, July 19th, 1862, the arm was the double-barrel, muzzle-loading shot gun, brought by the men from home. The calibre was varying. In the same company even cartridges could not be issued without difficulty. The Ordnance Department sent out cartridges composed of the charge of powder used in the "old" army musket, one slug and three buckshot. If the cartridge did not fit the barrel, the soldier was expected to bite off the powder end, pour the contents in, and ram the load down with the wooden ramrod. When the ramrod broke, as was sometimes the case, by pressure upon the hard wadding in a damp barrel, the soldier was practically disarmed. Generally, a leather strap suspended the shot-gun, muzzle upward, around the soldier's neck and across one shoulder. Ammunition of any kind was hard to get, in the first instance, and it was impossible to procure cartridge boxes equal to withstanding the weather, except by capture. There were some revolvers and pistols, of all patterns. The

sabres, where there were any, were those in possession of the several states at the time of secession, obtained from the United States, and those made by the Confederate Ordnance Department, a rude, but serviceable weapon. Horses and the horse equipment, furnished by each trooper for himself, were necessarily of varied quality. The southern horses were distinctly superior for the service to the western or northern horses. The saddle-bags were the same as those of the circuit-riding lawyers and the circuit-riding Methodist preachers of pioneer times, very much of an encumbrance in rapid riding. One light blanket next the horse's back and another tied by a string to the saddle, where any at all were found, was the limit of bedding for the trooper, and, as has been said, there were no tents. Changes from these original arms were made, as far as the cavalry was concerned, by captures from the enemy. Trouble, however, in finding ammunition for the "Burnside" carbine and others became very serious and was often prohibitive of use of the improved captured weapon. Later on, so many of Wheeler's regiments became well armed with captured infantry weapons that he dismounted them for fighting. A few of the regiments, when the war had well developed, were armed only with pistols and sabres, and these were kept to assist, by the mounted charge, the dismounted fighters. The mounted charge, however, was not limited to the regiments armed only with pistols and sabres. Those with carbines and rifles participated equally when called on. These latter would dash forward to close range, fire and reload without dismounting. Before the war closed, most of the men owned captured saddles, bridles and water-proof blankets.

At dawn, November 20th, Wheeler moved out of Macon to take up the most quixotic military service of the age.

General Sherman was amused that he came upon the great plantation of General Howell Cobb. He took a drink from his bottle of whiskey and lighted a cigar, then walked into a negro cabin to warm himself. He saw a negro girl hug and kiss reverently the flagstaff and dance around in

delirium of joy. He saw his soldiers in their work of destruction. The lieutenant, Georgia born, commanding his escort rode away to visit his uncle in the vicinity. The uncle received the renegade coldly, but the nephew in blue recompensed himself for the affront, indoors, by taking the best horse from the stable. On the march the general overtook one of his men carrying a ham on his musket, a jug of sorghum hung to his neck and a large honey-comb in one hand. The general swapped jests with the forager. The general "often saw come into camp mules, horses, and even cattle, packed with old saddles and loaded with hams, bacon, bags of cornmeal and poultry of every character and description." The negroes flocked to the army. He moved through plenty and fed all by ravaging the plantations. He says he destroyed a million dollars' worth "more than he could consume or waste." As he passed through towns, his bands played and his flags waved above his columns.

When Johnston's plan of war was forbidden, no plan of war remained. All was confusion. Nothing was ahead but slow death. Lee, at Petersburg, must send all his artillery horses and wagon horses a hundred miles from his army to be fed. He wrote to the president his troops were then without meat in the trenches and had been without for three days; he wrote to the secretary of war that unless immediate relief of the situation came to him final recovery must be hopeless. It was too late for relief.

General Grant was in absolute control at City Point, ten miles from his headquarters, where the entire resources of land and sea, in men and material, were gathered to his hand. There was no plan of war in any part of the Confederacy. Martyrdom was in plain view and the welcome was spoken at Richmond, that all the world might hear.

General Wheeler's escort in the lead, approached the village of Clinton. Dense fog in the early morning covered the earth. The enemy were there, but nothing could be seen twenty feet away. General Osterhaus' body-servant came along and was taken up. His master was, at the

moment, in arm's reach, unrecognized. A regiment already mounted, hearing the noise of the Confederates in the darkness, rode in the direction and the Confederates fled. The fog suddenly lifted. Wheeler charged the place and drove the enemy back upon their infantry. Five days later he swam the Oconee river, struck the main body of the enemy at Sandersville and fought sharply, capturing an army headquarters' wagon and 30 prisoners.

The town of Waynesboro sat on the Savannah river, some thirty miles east of Augusta. General Bragg was in Augusta. We shall give General Wheeler's narrative of occurrences there, officially reported:

"At evening [Nov 26th] I was informed by my pickets, near Ogeeche Shoals, that General Kilpatrick with a large force of cavalry had crossed the river on his way to Augusta. Leaving General Iverson to observe the enemy, I started immediately with my command, overtaking him at midnight. I immediately attacked and captured his picket, and pushed on to his camp and drove him back from the main Augusta road and out of his camps, capturing 1 stand of colors, some prisoners, some 50 horses, clothing, blankets, camp equipage, etc., in considerable quantities. The enemy immediately started towards Augusta, on the lower Augusta road. On reaching the house where General Kilpatrick had staid, I learned that he and his officers had been heard talking a great deal about Augusta. It was the opinion of citizens that this move was intended as a raid upon that place.⁴ Being mindful of the great damage that would be done by the enemy's burning the valuable mills and property not protected by fortifications, including the factories in the vicinity, the large portion of the city outside the fortifications, the arsenal and Sand Hills, I hoped by pressing him hard he might be turned from his purpose. I also learned that the night before he had sent a large party of men (500) to destroy the railroad bridge at Waynesboro, which convinced me that Augusta and not Waynesboro was Kilpatrick's destination as, had the latter been the place he designed striking, he would not

⁴Wheeler here sent a message of warning to General Bragg.

have sent a small party there the preceding day. Notwithstanding the jaded condition of my command, therefore, I pushed on rapidly, engaging and defeating his rear guards, whom I found fortified in every favorable point, frequently separated by two hundred or three hundred yards. Horses, arms and prisoners were captured in nearly every engagement.

"On reaching Briar Creek swamp we pressed the enemy so warmly that he turned off from Waynesboro. During the chase, the enemy set fire to all corn-cribs, cotton-gins and large numbers of barns and houses (residences). We succeeded in driving him off in nearly half the instances in time to extinguish the flames, and frequently pressed him so rapidly as to prevent his firing a number of houses, thus saving a large amount of property.

"I entered the town of Waynesboro with my staff just after dark, and just as the enemy were leaving it. The town was in flames, but with the assistance of my staff and escort we succeeded in staying the flames and extinguishing the fire in all but one dwelling, which was so far burned that it was impossible to save it. I immediately moved on and attacked the enemy, who were engaged in tearing up the railroad. The attack had the effect to stop their work upon the railroad and to keep them in line of battle all night.

"About 3 A. M. I sent Humes' division to gain the enemy's rear by turning his left flank, and sent a regiment to gain his rear by moving around his right. Unfortunately, these commands failed to get into position. At daylight the enemy withdrew for a short distance, unobserved, in consequence of a dense fog. As we advanced upon them, they charged our line, which charge we met and easily repulsed. I charged the enemy's flanks with Humes' and Anderson's commands and attacked their front with the balance of my command, driving the enemy from his fortified position, capturing a number of prisoners, arms and horses, and killing a great many who refused to surrender, and who were shot in the pursuit which ensued. The rout was complete and General Kilpatrick himself was very

nearly captured. We continued the charge until reaching a swamp, where the enemy had so constructed barricades as to make a very strong resistance. The enemy were soon driven from this position by a flank movement, after which I again charged and routed their entire force, killing, capturing and wounding nearly 200 and completely stampeding the whole force. His destruction was only prevented by an intervening swamp, at Buck Head Creek, which made it almost impossible to approach, and by the failure of the 4th Tennessee regiment to gain the enemy's rear, for which purpose it had been detached some two hours previous. The bridge over Buck Head Creek had been carefully prepared for burning by Kilpatrick's advanced guard, and on our reaching it the torch had been applied and the bridge was in flames, while a terrific fire from the enemy on the other side prevented me from extinguishing the flames. I dismounted the advance brigade and advanced it through the creek bottom to the bank, and finally drove the enemy sufficiently far from the opposite bank to enable a few brave men to work their way across and drive the enemy beyond range. By great energy and hard labor on the part of my men the fire was extinguished, and in a little more than an hour the bridge was reconstructed and the troops passing over. The passage, however, was very slow, on account of the rude and frail construction of the bridge. After advancing a mile, I discovered the enemy's position and ordered General Dibrell to turn their right flank by moving through a wood which screened the movement.

"As night was fast approaching, it became important to strike the enemy immediately, although only about 1200 of my command had crossed the creek. I moved upon the enemy and drove in his pickets. On discovering his line, I observed that General Dibrell, in attempting to turn his flank (although he had moved nearly a mile to our left), had nevertheless encountered the enemy's line of battle, which extended still beyond his position. Having parts of Harrison's and Ashby's brigades with me, the former in advance, I placed the 3d Arkansas regiment in

line, and the 8th and 11th Texas regiments in column and charged the enemy's position. Nothing could exceed the gallantry with which these troops responded to the bugle's call and hurled themselves upon the enemy, driving his cavalry in confusion and finally encountering the breastworks. This so terrified the enemy as to cause him to flee in uncontrollable confusion. Unfortunately, the open ground did not continue, and we finally encountered a line so positioned that it could not be approached by cavalry. I ordered Ashby's brigade to turn the enemy's left flank and take possession of the Louisville road, upon which the enemy was retreating. Owing to approaching dusk, Colonel Ashby, by accident, got on a road to the left of the one indicated by my order and notified me that he held possession of Louisville road. This error enabled the enemy to move off, by scattering through fields and woods, without order or organization."

Wheeler, reporting the affair to Bragg, said: "We stampeded and came near capturing Kilpatrick twice, but having a fleet horse he escaped bare-headed, leaving his hat in our hands."

Here General Felix Robertson, still commanding the wounded Anderson's brigade, received himself a wound that broke his arm. In the excitement he took the reins in his teeth and remained on the field. General Bragg, at Augusta, receiving the news, wrote to Wheeler: "Thank your gallant old command in my name for their brilliant services. I promised it in advance to the people of your native city and nobly have you redeemed my pledge."

There was renewed effort to go to Augusta. Kilpatrick after the Buck Head Creek fight never again sought Wheeler without infantry support. December 2d, protected by the 14th corps, he marched back to Waynesboro. Wheeler met the combined force at Rocky Creek but was easily flanked and driven back. On the 3d, at an early hour, the enemy employed themselves tearing up the railroad. Wheeler, from ambush, shot down the workers. After nightfall others resumed. These were

shelled from the distance. As usual, a considerable part of Wheeler's men were off in the night, bringing in on their horses forage and rations for the others in camp. To facilitate delivery of the loads the brigades were scattered. At break of day, the 4th, the enemy were discovered marching rapidly upon Waynesboro. Wheeler threw forward a regiment to delay them until his force might concentrate. He threw up barricades as hastily as possible. The enemy attacked with vigor, along his entire front. Two thousand dismounted cavalry faced Kilpatrick, who was supported by 10,000 infantry. The infantry took the lead. Kilpatrick rode around upon the flank. Wheeler fell back with difficulty from barricade to barricade. The enemy were again headed for Augusta and something must be done that had not yet been done. Five days' fighting had nearly worn down the hungry Confederates.

A staff officer's leather bag was packed with miscellaneous papers of no value. On top were placed certain letters from Bragg, at Augusta, to Wheeler, of recent date, of no importance except that Sherman knew Bragg's handwriting in "old" army times. The two had been friends and correspondents. This Wheeler knew.

Among the Bragg letters was a fictitious dispatch to Wheeler, in the former's name, written by a clerk, presumably, giving notice of the perfect security of Augusta; impregnable fortifications, garrison increased from the Army of Northern Virginia. With the bag across his shoulder Major Burford, adjutant-general, rode out on the skirmish line. The skirmishers, instructed in the part they were to play in the trick, ran away, after provoking attack; Burford followed, next the enemy, and in his haste dropped the bag in the road. The enemy, following in hot pursuit, seized the lost bag. In a private residence nearby General Sherman and several officers opened the bag and examined the contents. The resident family overheard that the army would resume its march upon Savannah.⁵

Captain Norton, a favorite young officer of Kilpatrick,

⁵The incident of the bag is related in one of the last letters written by General Wheeler before his fatal illness, addressed to the author.

was wounded and captured in these fights. The general sent Corporal Lacey under a flag with a letter to his "old friend," Wheeler. The corporal would remain as nurse to Captain Norton, if permitted. Wheeler replied:

"I assure you Captain Norton has and will receive every attention which can be bestowed on a wounded soldier. I am pleased to inform you that he was doing well and was out of pain at last accounts.

"Since the commencement of this sad war, I have used untiring exertions to maintain in my soldiers principles of chivalry and soldiery honor. They have been taught to spurn and despise the cowardly instincts which induce low men to frighten, abuse and rob defenseless women and children.

"You allude to old associations and promise to return my kindness to Captain Norton. I have only to ask, for the sake of those old associations (West Point classes) for your own sake, and for the sake of the institution where military honor was taught, that you will offer some protection to the families necessarily left defenseless, and not leave them to the mercy of a brutal soldiery.

"By so doing, not only will other advantages be gained, but your name will stand before the world in a much more enviable light. It is useless for me to recount the atrocities committed; suffice it to say that the history of no war, however barbarous, can equal atrocities daily and hourly committed by your command."⁶

Captain Norton died, at the home of Dr. Byne. Along with his letter, Wheeler returned to Kilpatrick a volume supposed to be prized by him, and which he had accidentally left at a private residence. Kilpatrick replied, acknowledging the courtesy.

Hardee blockaded the roads near Savannah and retired with a small force behind earthworks, three or four miles from the city. The enemy, near Ebenezer church, labored in removing the obstructions. Wheeler came up and trained a battery upon their camp in the darkness, where they slept unsuspectingly. "The stampede was beautiful to behold,"

⁶Off. War Rec., Serial No. 72, p. 635.

wrote a Confederate participant. "Their fires were burning brightly, showing us every movement in camp, while our guns were in perfect shadow and our force not seen at all. As shot after shot plunged into them, our men would give a long yell. The cutthroats couldn't stand it; they fled in utter rout for the narrow bridge over the creek, leaving horses, arms and the entire camp equipage behind. They had along many hundreds of fugitive slaves, but took care to crowd them off the bridge to save themselves, and so General Wheeler corraled the negroes and sent them back to their owners"—about two thousand in number. Secretary of War Stanton heard of the fate of the negroes and made complaint to Sherman, which Sherman resented.

Sherman's depredations extended from twenty to fifty miles deep. Over this area Wheeler rode incessantly, driving in his foraging parties. With these parties the Confederates fought every day, and some nights.

In the campaign, Reynolds and his scouts were in constant demand. Between Ogechee and Savannah rivers General Wheeler directed him to locate Howard's, once McPherson's, army. The five scouts had ridden all night. About sunrise they captured a mounted man, who proved to be one of Howard's escort. The man was acting vidette to a party of a dozen officers at breakfast at the residence of Mr. Miller, in the oak grove on the hill near by. The grove was enclosed by a heavy rail fence. Reynolds ordered Eugene DuBose to dismount and open a panel of the fence, unobserved if possible, while the others remained under cover of the woods. The prisoner having been placed in the custody of the fifth man, Ed Kennedy, the other four charged the house, around which was a white painted paling, to which the horses of those at breakfast were tied. Reynolds called lustily to Captain ———, on the hill, to shell the house. He, with one man on the front, fired into the company at table; DuBose and the other man dashed to the rear gate. The five scouts captured several prisoners, killed one or two, and carried off most of the horses. As the party rode rapidly away through the woods, in an hour or two they came upon a small party

who proved to be fugitives from Andersonville prison. They were taken along, greatly to the surprise of the captured.

Sherman made a peremptory demand on Hardee for the surrender of Savannah, threatening if resisted to turn the city over to his men for revenge. Hardee made spirited protest against the threat and refused. On the night of the 20th, he evacuated the place, moving over to the South Carolina side of the river. The next morning, as Sherman was preparing to move to the attack, he discovered the evacuation.

General Wheeler's report of his operations is of distinctive historic importance. He says: "My force never exceeded 3500 men and was so distributed in front, rear, and both flanks that I seldom had more than 2000 under my immediate command, which 2000 frequently charged and routed more than double their numbers. The enemy had been falsely informed by their officers that we took no prisoners, which caused him to fight with desperation and to run very dangerous gauntlets to escape capture, which frequently accounted for the large proportion of killed. In every rout of their cavalry and in the many fights which ensued, they continued to flee, refusing to surrender, notwithstanding the demands of my men, in close pursuit. Consequently no alternative was left but to shoot or sabre them to prevent escape.

"During the trip, I had parties to move a day or more in advance of the enemy, informing citizens where to run their negroes and stock in order to insure the safety of their property, offering them every assistance in so doing; but generally the citizens were so frightened as to be perfectly helpless. On the enemy's approach, pursuant to orders, I drove off such horses and mules as were exposed to the enemy's view, and have since taken every pains to restore such stock to its owners, generally with success. My command captured about 500 horses, many of which had been taken from citizens by the enemy, and have been returned to their owners when it was possible to do so.

In closing this report, I will state, that during the

last five months my command has been without wagons or cooking utensils, with orders to subsist upon the country. Its food has been limited to bread, baked upon boards and stones, and meat broiled upon sticks. It has not been paid in twelve months and has not had the regular issues of clothing which have been made to the infantry. During this time it has averaged, in direct marching, sixteen miles a day and, being without wagons, has been obliged to pack all the forage and rations to camp on horseback, which, together with scouting and other duties, would make the average traveling of each soldier twenty miles, at least, each day. During these five months my troops have been continuously in the immediate presence of the enemy, fighting nearly every day, and with brilliant success, except in a few instances, when small detachments sent off from my command met vastly superior numbers.

"During the five months my command has captured, killed and wounded more than its own effective strength. It has captured from the enemy and carried off the field 4 pieces of artillery, with caissons and battery wagons, 1200 mules and over 200 wagons; 2000 head of beef cattle, 3000 cavalry horses, with equipments, and over 4000 stands of arms. It has also captured a great number of the enemy's posts, with a large amount of stores, and has destroyed more railroads used by the enemy—stopping its communications for a longer time and with less loss than any other cavalry, although expeditions double its strength have been sent out on that duty.⁷

"As we were continually fighting the enemy, our camps could not be designated before nightfall. Details had then to be sent out to procure forage and rations, frequently making it midnight before supper could be prepared for my men; and then they were often compelled to be in the saddle before daylight. No men in the Confederate States have marched more, fought more, suffered more, or had so little opportunities for discipline; yet they are to-day

⁷The words "double its strength" doubtless refer to the Pulaski raid of Forrest, taken in September previous. Wyeth's Forrest corrects this, stating Forrest's men at 4500.

as orderly and well disciplined as any troops in the Confederate service.

I must particularly commend my Kentucky and Tennessee troops, whom, though they saw their homes thrown open by the advance of General Hood's army, I brought from the Coosa to the Savannah without a single desertion."

General Beauregard, whom we left at Corinth, Mississippi, as Wheeler rode off from Lovejoy station, near Atlanta, following Sherman, had now come to South Carolina, still in command of all troops there and in the southwestern states. He was incensed that Wheeler had not executed his order of November 20th, to "consume or destroy all supplies in your (his) reach." Sherman boasted that he destroyed all he could not consume. Sherman claimed to have had many wagon-loads of bread in his train that remained intact to the end of his march. Five days after Beauregard's order, the march having progressed into Bragg's territory, that officer ordered Wheeler, "above all, to destroy subsistence and forage over the route over which the enemy advances." Three days later Bragg dispatched to him: "Brigadier-General Young, with 800 men (dismounted cavalry) will report to you to-night. Mount his men as rapidly as possible by capture or impressment." Hardee ordered him to impress one horse for a special purpose, the mounting of a telegraph operator. Hardee ordered the destruction of rice, corn, mills, etc. Hampton ordered horses impressed and subsistence destroyed by Wheeler.

General Wheeler did not sanction the policy indicated by his orders. He requested that Brigadier-General Young and his dismounted 800 men should not be sent to him with the condition that they were to be mounted by impressed horses, where captures were wanting.⁸

Arrived at Savannah with some two hundred horses removed from deserted farms, he corraled them in a convenient place, notifying owners to come for them. Wheeler, writing to Hardee requesting a suspension of the order to

⁸Dodson's Wheeler and His Cavalry, 388.

burn subsistence, said: "Will it not be better to give them (the enemy) no provocation to burn?"

Great complaint among the people who lived on line of Sherman's march followed the departure of soldiers of both sides. Groups of marauders styling themselves "Wheeler's cavalry" lived upon the inhabitants, robbing them in defiant manner of the little that might have been saved from the soldiers. The people denounced "Wheeler's cavalry" as worse than Sherman. It was confessed by an officer of General Wilson's United States cavalry, after the war, that the invading army had hundreds of their men distributed through the country, representing themselves as "Wheeler's cavalry," sent out on their work of theft and insult.⁹

⁹Letters to Major W. J. Milner, Birmingham, Alabama.

CHAPTER XX

1865

CAMPAIGN IN SOUTH CAROLINA

Arrived at Savannah, General Sherman deliberated upon the relative advantages of the sea passage to Grant or the overland. In this mental perturbation the military phase of the situation was not the determinate influence. Hood's army had been wrecked at Nashville, and that fact Sherman knew when the secretary of war came to Savannah to lay the foundation of the rapidly approaching political carpet-bagger and negro control of the conquered states. To pass South Carolina unmolested by the penalties of nullification and defeat of the high protective tariff was not to be thought of. To humiliate and fill with woe the people who nursed Calhoun into power and immortality of fame, was officially pronounced by his government an opportunity not to be neglected by General Sherman.¹ "Lay waste South Carolina," was the word that came to the general from Washington.

For a time, the military question in the premises was: What of Hood's army, returned to northern Mississippi? Was Hood in condition to strike the rear of the invading column, in South Carolina? Just at this moment of indecision, Mr. John Forsyth, a gentleman of highest standing in the south, as we have seen, a Unionist in 1860, wrote to his friend, General Bragg:

"Hood's army is not worth the value of a regiment, if that officer be retained in command. I do not believe the army can be revived under him. I am not mistaken when I tell you its voice is both unanimous and earnest for Johnston, and the people are entirely in accord with the army."²

¹Halleck to Sherman, Off. War Records.

²Off. War Records.

The sources of Forsyth's knowledge were not closed to Sherman. President Davis, in reply to Forsyth, Cobb, and Congress, and Lee and innumerable other supplicants, signed, if he did not with his own hand write, the "Unsent Message."

General Sherman selected for his headquarters and residence the imposing home of Mr. Green, in the city of Savannah. Other officers of rank settled themselves, at discretion, in the best homes of the families. The local larders were low, but the sutlers soon flocked by sea to the rendezvous and the intruding officers supplied the shelves of the pantries, while they appropriated, at least for the time, the plate, china and glass of their involuntary hosts.

The commanding general was in no little measure amused to be accounted an abolition fanatic by exultant negroes of the town. He laughed in his sleeve to receive a call from some ladies, complaining that the officers who had quarters at their houses were given to hilarious and boisterous conduct. The wife of General Gustavus W. Smith, of New York, now in command of the Georgia state troops, was in the city, and Sherman received promptly a note, left by her husband, addressed, "Dear Sherman," soliciting certain favors for the wife. The Cincinnati-bred wife of Lieutenant-General Stewart, then with Hood in Tennessee, wrote inviting Sherman to call on her. General Hardee had left a note to the invading general, asking protection for his merchant-brother and the 31,000 bales of cotton he had stored in the city. Riding around the general was amused to behold the ingenuity of his common soldiers in escaping the effect of orders which forbade their occupying private houses. They built shacks in the yards and vacant lots, of the fencing, and furnished them from the residences in luxurious style. He found the door of one of these shacks to be a large wall mirror, with handsome gilt frame, the glass unfortunately fallen out.

General Sherman's indignation was ill concealed when Secretary of War Stanton arrived at Savannah by sea. He suspected the secretary had come to make political capital of the negro question. The secretary had heard, unofficially,

of the affair at Ebenezer Creek, where the troops crowded 2000 fugitive slaves off the bridge in their flight, abandoning them to Wheeler, who promptly sent them back to their masters, under guard.

Sherman had already made official report and explanation of this incident, but Secretary Stanton saw in the circumstance the coveted chance. He was anti-Lincoln. The time was ripe. The "rebellion" had been suppressed, virtually, and the new politics were at hand. The secretary heard of the arrival of a negro preacher from New York. His native shrewdness grasped, hard and fast, the good luck. The negro preacher, in Sunday clothes, watch and chain, reading and writing like a white man, was called to the secretary's office, seated on terms of social equality and sent forth with the imprimatur of the redemptionist among his race.

Without delay a levee was held at the secretary's chambers. The New York preacher corraled there as numerous an assemblage as the occasion and the available space seemed to justify. A catechetic exercise, conducted by the secretary in person, was circumstantial and prolonged.³

The catechist satisfied himself that some of the freedmen, though illiterate, might be organized for political ends. He was in no little measure surprised to discover that, while they were to be relied on to vote as instructed by northern men, all expressed kindly feeling toward the "old master." The great majority seemed to have no ambition, as yet, for the franchise. Pay for work was the change from the old order most appreciated.

General Wheeler, conscious that the peculiar and severe work of his cavalry in following Sherman for a month called for extraordinary attention to discipline, caused constant drilling to be practiced. At his request Hardee sent an inspector, who happened to be Colonel Charles Colcock Jones, Jr. As many as could be collected from outposts were put in line. The report was highly favorable. In course of the inspection Colonel Jones found before him a

³Memoirs of General Sherman.

young man, Edward Kennedy, one of the five assailants at the Miller house a few weeks before. Kennedy had the complete horse equipment of a general officer in the United States army: two United States navy revolvers, in a general officer's belt; a repeating carbine, captured; a pair of officer's spurs, a pair of waterproof blankets. The colonel took his name, instructing him to call for a furlough.

General Wheeler found practically the entire white population of Beaufort district (county), planters' families and their overseers, fled to Columbia and the up-country to escape the invader.

General Beauregard was now the ranking officer in South Carolina. The Carolinians were very fond of him. His defense of Charleston was complete. Beauregard sent Colonel Roman, of his staff, a lawyer of New Orleans, to inspect Wheeler's cavalry. The report was unfavorable, reflecting Beauregard's prejudice. The general wrote to Richmond a strangely partial letter of condemnation of the command. Hardee, in answer to a call from the president, telegraphed:

"CHARLESTON, S. C., January 8, 1865.

"His Excellency Jefferson Davis,
"Richmond, Va.

"Wheeler's cavalry has been reorganized under my supervision and now consists of three divisions and eight brigades. It is a well-organized and efficient body. The reports of its disorganization and demoralization are without foundation and the depredations ascribed to his command can generally be ascribed to marauders, claiming to belong to it. I know of nothing at present to add to its efficiency except the promotion of Brigadier-General Allen to major-general and of Colonel Dibrell to brigadier-general, for which recommendations have been sent on.

"W. J. HARDEE,
"Lieutenant-General."⁴

Beauregard heard of Hardee's dispatch and promptly

⁴Off. War Rec., Serial No. 99, p. 1000.

wrote to the authorities at Richmond a reiteration of his own report. Wheeler was profoundly mortified. He wrote more than one lengthy and earnest personal letter to his friend General Bragg, at Augusta, pouring out his heart. General Richard Taylor had given General Clanton *carte blanche* to recruit from General Wheeler's command; Colonel Wade, then with Forrest, had authority from Taylor to recruit from his command. The allegation that his command straggled was, doubtless, in a measure true, but the nature of their service must be considered, the influence of General Taylor's orders must be allowed. "I make all these charges to you," the letter of December 28th to Bragg said, "because I feel grateful for the kindness you have shown to me on so many occasions and I knew you would regret to see me neglectful. I have made two written applications for a board of officers of rank and standing to investigate the entire matter and report the facts. The world is getting worse and worse every day. It is astonishing what false representations are made by some parties."

The day following this letter General Wheeler issued a general order:

"The continued and grave complaints made by citizens against this command require that the most stringent efforts be made by all officers to prevent the slightest depredations of any character in the future. Two or more staff officers shall visit private houses where the men have received rations or forage, to ask for a statement of the conduct of the men. These staff officers must report in writing in full, every Sunday morning." A circular from headquarters was distributed among citizens, requesting them to report visits of the men to their premises. The men were living on the country necessarily.

General Sherman remained a month at Savannah. Having determined upon the march instead of the sea route for mobilization of his army, he resumed the enterprise of destruction of private property and of the lives of non-combatant white people. Modern wars offer no parallel to the terror of his advance through the land of Calhoun.

Wheeler found Kilpatrick's cavalry and a supporting infantry at Sister's Ferry, crossing the Savannah. The river was at flood and the current strong. He made rafts of logs, lashed together, and turned them adrift from upstream to strike the pontoons. Many troops crossing were thus thrown into the stream and drowned.

General Sherman was by nature a fit instrument for the use of a vindictive and vulgar government at Washington. By nature he was hard, unsympathetic and revengeful.

To the inquiry of his superiors whether he could support his army on the march of devastation from the country, Sherman made the characteristic reply: "Of course the enemy will carry off and destroy some forage, but I will burn the houses, where the people burn their forage, and they will get tired of it." Sherman crossed the Savannah with 60,000 men and 40,000 mules and horses, late in January, 1865

No troops but Wheeler's made any fight against Sherman's advance into South Carolina at any time.

The invading host vied among themselves for the distinction of "laying waste South Carolina." Aged gentlemen were seized in their houses, beaten with sabres, hung by the neck, until life was almost extinct. Ladies of wealth and culture suffered the utmost indignities. The marriage ring was torn from fingers, watches from belts, earrings from ears. Pillage most degrading, arson, murder most foul, followed the track of this invader. On the seventh day of the march, General Wheeler sent a letter to General Howard: "I have the honor to propose, that, if the troops of your army discontinue the burning of houses (residences) of citizens, I will discontinue burning cotton."

General Sherman took up the correspondence, "I hope you will burn all the cotton," he answered, "and save us the trouble. We don't want it, and it has proven a curse to our country. All you don't burn, I will. As to private houses, occupied by peaceful families, my orders are not to molest or disturb them, and I think my orders are obeyed. Vacant houses, being of no use to anybody, I care little about." There were no "vacant" residences in South

Carolina, except where the occupants were in flight from terror of the invader. Sherman, seeing some poultry in a yard, inquired of the lady of the house how it was that the birds had escaped his men. She showed him a book with his name written on the fly-leaf, years ago, presented to a member of her family. By the writing she had convinced the soldiers of her former good standing with their commander, and her poultry, plate and watch, etc., were left to her.

Kilpatrick had been defeated, as we have seen, in his attempt to reach Augusta from the Georgia side of the Savannah. He started up the South Carolina side with his cavalry, supported by the 14th corps of infantry, to reach that town and its wealth. Wheeler met him twenty miles from the river bridge connecting Augusta with the South Carolina side, at Aiken. Kilpatrick failed again. The battle raged desperately. Wheeler had but 2000 of his men with him. By ingenious concealments and precipitate charges he put the foe to flight. Kilpatrick retreated upon the main army.

Here Wheeler received notice from General D. H. Hill, at the moment in command at Augusta, that he would burn some twenty thousand bales of cotton, just made ready for the torch in the streets to save it from the enemy. Wheeler replied: "Do not burn the cotton. The enemy may not reach Augusta. We would feel very badly to make such an unnecessary sacrifice."

Governor Magrath, in the name of South Carolina, thanked General Wheeler, expressing "the grateful acknowledgments of all our people" for the victory at Aiken. The governor then wrote most earnestly to the president to concentrate the armies of Virginia and other points against Sherman. "If Charleston falls, all is lost," he wrote. "Richmond may fall and yet the Confederacy survive." The president seemed to believe there was a large reserve military population throughout the Confederacy that had only to be summoned, to swell the ranks of the army indefinitely. Acting upon this conception of the situa-

tion, he at once selected from the Army of Northern Virginia, and elsewhere, officers of high repute, natives of South Carolina, to repair thither. General James Connor took his small brigade from the trenches at Petersburg to Charleston, his home. General James Chesnut, long United States senator, was sent; General Z. C. Deas, one of the stoutest fighters of the Army of Tennessee, was sent. Butler's division of South Carolina cavalry, with its brilliant young South Carolinian leader, arrived. Most of all, Wade Hampton, chief of Lee's cavalry, the most beloved of all South Carolinians, came. Lee was seriously crippled; Beauregard not at all assisted.

Wheeler was made major-general in February, 1863; Hampton was raised to that rank in the succeeding August. With the fall of Stuart, in Virginia, May, 1864, Wheeler became the ranking officer of the cavalry arm in the Confederate service.

Hampton reported at Beauregard's headquarters, in Columbia, February, 1865, from Virginia, unassigned, accompanied by no troops and with no disturbance of rank as between himself and Wheeler. General Beauregard at once began persistent demands on the government to raise Hampton to the rank of lieutenant-general, so as to place all the cavalry under him. Up to that time the grade of lieutenant-general was not known in the cavalry arm. The commission of Hampton as lieutenant-general bore date of February 14th, 1864. The commission of Forrest to the grade of lieutenant-general bore date of February 28th, 1865.⁵

Major-General Butler of the cavalry of the Army of Northern Virginia, a South Carolinian of eminent lineage, took from the cars at Columbia about 1000 veteran troopers—what was left of his division.

⁵I have caused the journal of the Confederate States Senate to be searched to find evidence of the confirmation of General Wheeler to the grade of lieutenant-general, but in vain. Dodson (p. 339) gives the date of such a commission same as Forrest's, February 28th. General J. E. Johnston addressed "Major-General Joseph Wheeler" on April 27th, 1865. Wheeler replied, signed, "Major-General." Wheeler's military duties in the Confederate service terminated with that correspondence, leaving him by his own claim a major-general.

A staff officer relates that, while riding with Hampton over the red hills of Fairfield General Wheeler met them. Hampton had never before seen him. Hampton, a superb rider, tall and soldierly and freshly mounted, then and there informed Wheeler of his orders to take command. "Certainly, general, I will receive your orders with pleasure," was the quick response of the younger soldier. Both Hampton and Forrest were fifteen years older than Wheeler. Both had excellent training in early life for the career of cavalry commander in war. They knew the horse and his habits; they were good woodsmen; each was a large and successful cotton planter, familiar with authority over men, with mind accustomed to quick and decisive processes.

Whatever motive the government may have had in the arbitrary promotion of Hampton over Wheeler, no substantial result was apparent. Hampton's presence and the governor's call on all, able to bear arms, between the ages of sixteen and seventy, were contemporaneous, but the fate of the Confederacy could not be delayed.

Hampton here made proof of his high southern breeding. He exercised his superior authority with all possible deference to Wheeler's feeling. He issued no orders to his subordinate, which he could avoid, interfered with him as little as possible and never appeared with him on the field of actual combat.⁶ This courtly relation of the superior to the inferior is to be traced all the way through the remaining weeks of war.

By easy stages, five or six miles a day, General Sherman marched from the low country of rice plantations to Columbia, Wheeler fighting on his flanks, front and rear, at every opportunity. General Garlington, with the state reserves—men of seventy and boys of sixteen and under—found his troops so uncertain of endurance on the march as to be of little avail.

Beauregard, at Columbia, commanded Wheeler to fight specially at the crossing of Broad river. The order was well obeyed. Wheeler fought on both sides of the stream,

⁶Letter of General Wheeler to the author.

he in person commanding on the far side, next the foe. Men were sent back with combustibles to fire the bridge and it was already in flames when the general and the last of his men crossed. Then the firing across the stream continued. Captain Mathews, commanding Company "C," 8th Confederate, was one of the killed on the side next the enemy. Several of his men, who loved him well, made a dash up to the very muzzles of the guns of the foe, threw the body across the pommel of a saddle and succeeded in bearing it across the bridge. A detail took it to Columbia for burial in the city cemetery. While the burial services were in progress, the enemy threw shells into the crowd at the grave.

The 15th corps, under Logan, and the 17th, under Blair, entered the city, after shelling it, already surrendered, from a distance. Mayor Goodwyn and other citizens rode out to meet General Sherman in person, to assure him no Confederate troops were in the town and that no resistance would be offered to his possession. They rode along with Sherman back to the town, assured by him of his satisfaction. General Logan made his headquarters in the private residence of the widow of General Hampton, the soldier of 1812, father of Colonel Hampton, Jackson's aide at New Orleans, grandfather of General Hampton of the Confederate cavalry. This was February 17th.

As General Hampton had never been seen by Wheeler's men, he was unknown to the few who were drunk and pillaging a store as the Confederates withdrew. He rode up, peremptorily ordering them to rejoin their command. They were impudent and resentful of his authority.

A quantity of cotton in bales in the middle of the main street was fired by Sherman's men. Fire broke out in many houses. The invaders broke into bank vaults, where great quantities of family plate from the low country had been placed for safekeeping. The scene became awe-inspiring. While this went on, General Sherman mounted his horse and rode at a walk through the streets, looking as if well pleased.⁷ Pillaging private residences and then applying the torch was universal. Mrs. Hubemont, refugee from

⁷Account of Dr. James G. Gibbes, former mayor and now eye-witness.

the low country, living alone with black servants in attendance, accosted a passing federal soldier to ask that a guard be sent to her protection. The soldier proffered his own services, and soon ingratiated himself so in the confidence of the venerable lady that she pointed out to him in the front yard the pits, securely covered, where her old Madeira was buried, offering a bottle to him. The volunteer guard soon went for companions, and together they dug up and consumed most of the wine. A squad visited "Milwood," four miles from the town, the splendid home of Colonel Hampton, father of the Confederate chieftain, pillaged it and burned it. A squad started off on the Camden road, while the town was ablaze, burned the residence of Dr. John Wallace, a mile out, and the near-by residence of Mrs. Starke. A slave maid, detected bearing off Dr. Wallace's silver plate, was rudely hustled back to the house, the plate deposited on the floor, bed-linen heaped about it and the pile set on fire, the men announcing that they had already as much silver as they could carry from the banks in town. Two miles out, on the Camden road, was the residence of General Hampton, the Confederate. There a rare library of old books, some of them collected in Europe, was burned with the handsome house. General Logan had prepared to burn his headquarters, "old Mrs. Hampton's" house in Columbia. The faithful servants had removed bed-linen, etc., to a safe place; barrels of pitch were ready; fagots were at hand, when down the boardwalk came in procession the white-clad girls from the convent, led by the Mother Superior, bearing a white paper in her hand,—an order from General Sherman to Logan to turn the house over to her. His men had just burned the convent. Mrs. Sherman was a Catholic; their daughter, Minnie, had been educated in part by this Mother Superior, in Ohio. Logan swore mightily.*

A distinguished traveller, earlier a participant in the work of devastation, yet earlier an agitator of the political situation and fomenter of war, wrote a few months later:

"My travels in the interior of the south in the summer

*Mrs. Chesnut's Diary.

and fall of 1865 took me over the track of Sherman's march, which, in South Carolina at least, looked for many miles like a broad black streak of ruin and desolation,—fences gone, lonesome smokestacks, surrounded by dark heaps of ashes and cinders, marking the spots where human habitations had stood, the fields along the road wildly overgrown by weeds, with here and there a sickly-looking patch of cotton or corn cultivated by negro squatters. In the city of Columbia, the political capital of the state, I found a thin fringe of houses encircling a confused mass of charred ruins of dwellings and business buildings which had been destroyed by a sweeping conflagration.

"No part of the south I then visited had, indeed, suffered as much from the ravages of the war as South Carolina,—the state which was looked upon by the northern soldier as the principal instigator of the whole mischief and therefore deserving of special punishment."⁹

This testimony to the revolutionary character of the war of invasion is perfect. Civil jurisdiction had been renounced by the Washington government and the power to inflict "special punishment" upon a whole people, against whom it could not frame a bill of indictment, was relegated to an irresponsible conqueror.

Some cavalry from Kilpatrick's column, ordered up the country, to watch the march of Hood's remnants in one of their excursions against undefended private residences, where superannuated men, women, children and negro servants only were to be found, approached the home of the bride of Captain George Knox Miller, of the 8th Confederate regiment, Wheeler's corps, the author of several letters from the field already found among these pages. The letters, originally addressed to his wife, were carefully stored by her in bundles. As the hostile squad of cavalry was seen galloping up the avenue, she dashed the stout bundle on the blazing log fire. Her negro maid-servant thereupon rushed in, exclaiming, "Oh, my mistress, no Yankees shall get your letters!" Snatching the bundle, the faithful and appreciative black maid carried off to concealment and safety some of

⁹Carl Schurz; McClure's Mag., May, 1908.

the most valuable testimony of history to the thorny road and the splendid heroism which presaged her freedom. The famous Peay residence, a splendid example of southern architecture, in an adjoining district, was ruthlessly and heartlessly burned.

Sherman entered Cheraw, the ancient town at the head of navigation of the Pee Dee, just as Hardee escaped over the river bridge and Butler had successfully fired the wooden structure. There he rested from his labors by free indulgence of his cultivated taste in old Madeira, "refugeeing," like Mrs. Hubemont's, from Charleston cellars. He found drawing-room carpets and bed-room furniture, of the ancient and handsome style. He took away that which pleased his fancy.¹⁰ His staff, or some members, took possession of a widow's residence, where there were infant children. The lady and her family could obtain no subsistence, except at the self-imposed visitor's table. They politely remarked there to her that they were indebted to her own government for the honor of her acquaintance, explaining, "Madam, the removal of General Johnston opened the way to us." They fed their horses, tied to trees in the front yard, consumed all her groceries, burned all the mills within reach, and when they finally rode away the widow and four young children had nothing to subsist on for several days, except the waste corn, picked out from the horses' feeding-places on the ground around the trees in the front yard. It was their luck. Others, less in luck, starved to death.

Meanwhile the invading cavalry rode, marauding, through the plantations on either side of the stream. One planter had sixty-five head of blooded horses, mares, colts and mules, hidden in the dense cane. Treacherous negroes pointed out the place to the invader and all were driven off. On the same property, one hundred and sixty-five bales of cotton, to the value of \$40,000, gold, were found and burned. Near by were the mellow contents of a Charleston private wine cellar, "refugeeing." The troopers drank as long as they could keep their feet under their heads, then, in drunken

¹⁰General Sherman's Memoirs.

hilarity, threw the full bottles high into the air, shouting: "Here goes my grandfather!" "And here goes my granduncle!" as the collision brought down shower after shower of mellowed Madeira upon their heads, mingled with fragments of the broken bottles.

When General Lee reprimanded most vigorously one of his soldiers whom he caught, in disobedience to orders, with a single green apple, taken from a Pennsylvania orchard, psychology staggers at Lee's failure in "rebellion," and Sherman's marvellous exemption from anathema in success.

On March 6th General Kilpatrick crossed the river (known as the Yadkin, in North Carolina, becoming "Pee Dee" as it crosses the state line, into South Carolina) and stopped at Rockingham. Now, Sherman might march northwest, from Cheraw, via Rockingham, North Carolina, thence through Charlotte, to fall upon the rear of General Lee at Petersburg; or he might take a northeasterly course via Fayetteville, on the Cape Fear river, by which he would come in communication with the seacoast and the Schofield reinforcements, ready for him there.

The government, seeing the direction of Sherman's march, sent General Beauregard to Charlotte to receive the brigades of the Army of Tennessee as they arrived and reorganize them to confront him. Augusta, Georgia, lay in the line of march of these troops, and there General D. H. Hill remained to facilitate progress. They were forced to march through most of Georgia, from Macon, on foot and with neither wagons nor arms. They passed, unorganized, through all of South Carolina, as far as Chester. Sherman heard of the movement and became apprehensive. Really, he might have sent Kilpatrick to waylay and capture all.

Patriotic devotion, constancy in a desperate situation never was more fully exemplified in a soldiery than in these of the outraged Army of Tennessee, making their slow and toilsome journey to effect reorganization under their beloved commander, waiting confidently.

Kilpatrick engaged in the execution of his orders to keep his cavalry between Sherman's compact column and the

straggling line of unarmed Confederates moving toward Charlotte.

It was silently determined upon by Wheeler's men, each for himself, sustained by individual intelligence and manhood, to revenge themselves on the barbarous acts of the foragers of the foe. The correspondence inserted is self-explanatory:

"HEADQUARTERS, ARMY OF INVASION,

"In the field, S. C., Feby. 22d, 1865.

"Major-General Wheeler,

"Commanding C. S. Cavalry,

"General: Yesterday a lieutenant, seven men and a sergeant were taken prisoners by one of your regiments—if I am correctly informed—a Texas regiment—armed with Spencer carbines and commanded by a lieutenant-colonel.¹¹

"This officer and his men, after surrendering, were inhumanely, cowardly murdered. Nine of my cavalrymen were also found murdered yesterday, five in a barnyard, three in an open field and one in the road. Two had their throats cut from ear to ear. This makes, in all, eighteen federal soldiers murdered yesterday by your men.¹² Unless some satisfactory explanation be made to me before sundown, February 23d, I will cause 18 of your men, now my prisoners, to be shot at that hour, and if this cowardly act be repeated, if my people when taken are not treated in all cases as prisoners of war should be, I will not only retaliate as I have already mentioned, but there shall not be a house left within reach of my scouting parties on my line of march, nor will I be responsible for the conduct of my soldiers, who will not only be allowed but encouraged to take a fearful revenge. I know of no other way to intimidate cowards.

"I am, general, very respectfully,

"Your obedient servant,

"J. KILPATRICK,

"Brevet Major-General, Commanding Cavalry."

¹¹Captain A. M. Shannon, of the line of a Texas regiment, was chief of scouts, forty-five select men with whom Reynolds and his scouts were incorporated. It was Shannon's party to whom General Kilpatrick now refers. The arms they bore were all captured from the enemy.

¹²It is understood from surviving cavalrymen, at this writing, that the enemy killed were a party going from house to house ravishing women.

General Wheeler immediately replied from a point some twenty miles eastward:

“HEADQUARTERS, CAVALRY CORPS,

“Chesterfield, S. C.,

“February 22d, 1865.

“Major-General Kilpatrick, U. S. Army,

“Commanding Cavalry.

“General: Your dispatch of this date is received and I am much shocked at the statements it contains. I am satisfied that you are mistaken in the matter. I have no Texas regiments armed with Spencer rifles, and none commanded by a lieutenant-colonel. The two Texas regiments in my command are commanded by captains and neither was in any engagement yesterday. If any of my regiments were in any engagement yesterday, that fact has not yet been reported to me. I will have the matter promptly investigated and see that prompt justice is done. Should the report, however, by any means prove correct, I prefer that the retaliation may be inflicted upon the parties guilty of the misdeeds and not upon innocent persons. I have no desire whatever to make counter-threats in response to those which you have thought proper to address to me, but should you cause eighteen of my men shot because you chance to find that number of yours dead, I shall regard them as so many murders committed by you and act accordingly. I trust, however, such a painful necessity may not be forced upon me.

“Your threat to ‘burn every house as far as my (your) scouts extend’ is of too brutal a character for me, and, I think, my government, to reply to.

“Respectfully, sir,

“Your obedient servant,

“J. WHEELER,

“Major-General C. S. Army.”

General Kilpatrick rejoined the next day, promising to take no immediate action.

Wheeler had some prisoners, brought in by the scouts, on the day of the alleged murders. They were brought up

and readily testified to the soldierly conduct of their captors. This testimony was sent to General Kilpatrick and the prisoners he had condemned to execution, in retaliation, were released. Kilpatrick, however, remained skeptical of the value of the testimony of his two men, who gave it in captivity. He talked with "a reliable man" who had been all day in company with the murdered men and saw the deed committed.

The offended general did not let pass the opportunity to give vent to his sense of the general condition of "rebellion" in South Carolina. He closed his correspondence with the following inflammable utterance:

"I am alive to the fact that I am surrounded by citizens, as well as soldiers, whose bitter hatred to the men I have the honor to command did not originate with this war, and I expect that some of my men will be killed elsewhere than on the battlefield; but I know, and shall not hesitate to apply, a sure remedy in each case."

CHAPTER XXI

1865

CAMPAIGN IN NORTH CAROLINA

During this winter Congress made several delayed protests against the executive. Certain results followed.

A great merchant of Charleston, South Carolina, Mr. Trenholm, who had been the foreign commercial agent of the government, displaced Secretary of the Treasury Memminger; General John C. Breckinridge displaced Secretary of War Seddon. Perhaps the most positive of the expressions for military reform by this body was the act creating the office of general-in-chief. In this matter, the "anti-administration" party seemed to include everybody. Two years before, a bill making Lee commander of all armies in the field, was vetoed by the president. The second and milder act was passed January 31, 1865, and the office created was "general-in-chief under the president"—the best circumstances permitted. In the same month a resolution passed the body calling for the restoration of General Johnston.

The answer to all this legislation and the clamorous public opinion upon which it was based, was, as we have seen, the "Unsent Message." We are entitled to all the facts. General Longstreet, in anxiety, wrote to the new general-in-chief,—a title General Lee, the beneficiary, never used, as it was too nearly empty to command his serious thought.

"HEADQUARTERS 1ST ARMY CORPS,
"February 2d, 1865.

"General R. E. Lee,
"Commanding.

"General: I learn from friends at the south that nothing but the restoration of General Johnston to command of the Army of Tennessee will restore that army to organiza-

tion, morale and efficiency." The letter went on to express the hope that General Lee would give his first attention in his enlarged office to the restoration of Johnston, "one of the best and ablest of our generals." "He has not been successful, but no man could be successful if he has not the support of the authorities above him."

"I remain very respectfully,

"Your obt. svt.,

"J. LONGSTREET,

"Lieutenant-General."

Nothing had been done by the government in answer to the requests of the Congress and the Legislature of Virginia, for the restoration of General Johnston. General Lee waited until February 19th, nearly three weeks after his own legal promotion, and then wrote to the secretary of war suggesting the great need of that commander in North Carolina to receive and reorganize the arriving fragments of the Army of Tennessee. The secretary fully concurred and promised to use the imprimatur of Lee's name in presenting the matter to the president.

Johnston had been living for some weeks at Lincolnton, North Carolina, and there, on February 23d he received orders to take command. He went to see Beauregard at Charlotte, and found him entirely willing to be superseded by the new assignment.

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We reach a clearer view of the desperation of the military situation in the correspondence of General Lee from the trenches at Petersburg. In reply to a direct request from the new secretary of war, the following letter was written in great candor:

"Confidential.

"HEADQUARTERS C. S. ARMIES,

"March 9, 1865.

"General John C. Breckinridge,

"Secretary of War, Richmond.

"Sir: I have received to-night your letter of this date

requesting my opinion upon the military condition of the country.

"It must be apparent to every one that it is full of peril and requires prompt action.

"My correspondence with the department will show the extreme difficulties under which we have labored in the past year to keep this army furnished with necessary supplies. This difficulty is increased, and it seems almost impossible to maintain our present position with the means at the disposal of the government.

The country within reach of our present position has been nearly or quite exhausted, and we are now dependent upon what those departments can provide. Their respective chiefs can best inform you of the means at their command, but from all the information I possess, the only practicable relief is in the generous contribution of the people to our necessities, and that is limited by the difficulties of transportation, whatever may be the extent of their willingness and ability, of which I am unable to form an accurate opinion.

"Unless the men and animals can be subsisted, the army cannot be kept together, and our present lines must be abandoned. Nor can it be moved to any other position where it can operate to advantage without provisions to enable it to move in a body.

"The difficulties attending the payment and clothing of the troops, though great, are not so pressing and would be relieved in a measure by military success. The same is true as to the ordnance supplies, and I confine my remarks chiefly to those wants which must be met now, in order to maintain a force adequate to justify a reasonable hope of success.

"The army operating under General Johnston has not yet been concentrated and its strength is not accurately known. It is believed, however, to be inferior to that of the enemy and its condition gives no strong prospect of a marked success.

"In the more southern portions of the country, east of the Mississippi, our forces are numerically inferior to those of the enemy, nor do I see any prospect, from my present

information, of putting them on a footing adequate to the performance of the service that they will probably be called upon to render during the approaching campaign.

"With sentiments of great respect, your obedient servant,

"R. E. LEE,
"General."

Longstreet had heard of ample supplies in private hands, in North Carolina, and proposed to Lee to impress the gold, known to be held by private persons, in Richmond and elsewhere, to purchase them. Lee thought impressment of the gold not necessary, even if practicable. Longstreet suggested various strategical dispositions by which Sherman first, and Grant next, might be defeated. "I am of the opinion," he wrote to Lee on the very day Johnston resumed command—"I am of the opinion that there is not much fight in Grant's army, and there can't be a great deal in Sherman's after his long march."

Thus affairs were at Richmond. At two o'clock in the morning Lee sent for Gordon. The young commander found his superior in an unwonted state of mind. He stood over the embers of the log fire, his head resting heavily on folded arms, that lay upon the mantel. Scouts had brought news of heavy reinforcements to General Grant. What was to be done? Turning to a table, spread with reports just in from different commands, Gordon was requested to read. The army was weak and growing weaker. It was half clothed, far less than half fed. The cavalry horses were in miserable plight. The train and artillery horses were scattered for one hundred miles, outside lines, to be fed. What action would Gordon advise, under the circumstances?

The young officer suggested three possible courses: First, to make terms; second, to join Johnston in North Carolina; third, to fight. One of these three things should be done, preference given in the order named. "I agree with you, fully," was the reply, from the general-in-chief.

At that time Lee's and Johnston's combined armies, poorly equipped and provided for, numbered not more

than 65,000 effectives; Grant's and Sherman's, combined, not less than 280,000, equipped and supplied to a degree of perfection that preparations for war had never before reached.

Lee said little as to proposition number one—"terms." Consideration could only belong to the army under emergency. It was a political matter. As to joining Johnston, he said there were two men who might be expected to object,—the president of the Confederacy and General Grant. Grant's objection was really decisive, as the army horses were too poor to allow retreat of the army, organized. The general commanding would see the president.

The president expressed his views without hesitation. The result of the Hampton Roads conference had removed all prospects of peace. The army must fight. So confident was the president of the ability of the army to fight, and so sure was he of the safety of Richmond, that he invited a distinguished lady, Mrs. C. C. Clay, whose husband was yet on the Canadian frontier, to select Richmond as a winter resort, free from the molestation of the enemy, possible in other places, he said.

Gordon was now authorized by Lee to formulate a plan to fight, as the president had ordered. The daring and brilliant night attack on Fort Steadman followed.¹

The attack failed. Grant reported to Washington that his skirmish line had been broken for an hour or about. The line of action selected by the president from the three possible methods of procedure had failed. The president never surrendered or offered terms, even when the entire Confederacy had been overrun and was in possession of the invader.

Wheeler, still holding himself between Kilpatrick and Hardee, arrived at the Yadkin the afternoon of March

¹Reminiscences of General Gordon. I will in passing add this: General Gordon was then perhaps thirty years of age and had not received a military education. He was, however, one of the most daring and efficient commanders of the Confederacy.

6th. Butler was then on the northern side, having, as we have seen, crossed with Hardee over the bridge at Cheraw.

The oldest river men declared the river entirely impracticable. The water was raging, extending far over the swamp, with here and there little outstanding patches of highland visible. General Wheeler remarked that it was important that he should lose no time in reaching Hardee. He would, in person, cross the water. Twenty Texans volunteered to follow him. All slowly rode to the edge of the water. Eighteen of the men were soon swept down stream, back to shore. McKnight and Nance, common soldiers, with the general, struck out to make the crossing. He asked for no companions; these were volunteers.² As those left on the bank gazed upon the struggling three, nothing was visible above the water except the heads of the riders and the noses and tips of the ears of the horses. The first landing was on an island, midway. Wringing the water from clothing and emptying boots occupied a few minutes, while the horses rested. The three talked together of the entrance into the Yankee lines which they were about to make. The course was resumed and terra firma again pressed, without further trouble. The day was now spent. A farmer of Confederate sympathies, residing near, wished to give them supper and beds, but had just sent his son, a Confederate soldier, to hide in the woods, lest the enemy should discover his politics and burn his house. He recommended them to a neighbor, however, who was a Tory. The uninvited guests did not reveal their names to the Tory, and the wet gray uniform passed for blue by the uncertain light of the log fire. The host had heard only of blue-coats around there, and never dreamed of Wheeler's swimming the flooded river. He told the general of his apprehension lest the falling waters might allow Wheeler to cross. He expressed serious alarm, as Wheeler's cavalry were "worse than Yankees, stealing all a man had." The general smiled and assented. Wheeler's men were bad, indeed, he said.

After a breakfast of fried eggs and ham, the general

²McKnight, in *Confederate Veteran*, Feb., 1911.

rode out and found Captain Shannon and his scouts, who had crossed by flatboat higher up. He took command and attacked a part of the enemy, found robbing a house. They were routed and thirty-five of their number killed and wounded.³

The river subsided rapidly, and on the 8th the entire command forded it. It was ascertained that Kilpatrick was between Hampton and Hardee, at Fayetteville. Up to this time Wheeler had been operating on Sherman's left and Butler on his right, with Hardee. On the 8th the two cavalry forces were united under Hampton, for the first time. Immediate action to place the whole cavalry between Kilpatrick and Hardee was plainly imperative.

Kilpatrick, with his escort, had been riding in the afternoon from one road to another, meeting different sections of his own command. He was a good fighter in pitched battle, but no match for Hampton in strategical or tactical movements.

In the gloaming of the 9th General M. C. Butler, riding at the head of Colonel Humphrey's regiment of his command, saw some troopers approaching upon a fork road. Humphrey assured the general he had no detachment out in that direction. Quick as thought, Butler rode alone to intercept the strangers at the junction of the roads. "Who comes there?" he shouted, in his powerful tones. "Fifth Kentucky," came the answer. "Ride forward, sir, I would confer with you." An officer with an orderly approached. Butler turned his horse, requesting the officer to follow. As the two struck the head of Humphrey's column, Butler drew his revolver and presenting it in the face of the officer, who yet rode by his side, demanded his surrender. Humphrey moved up and captured the remainder of the detachment, except a few, in their tracks, without firing a gun. This was Kilpatrick's escort. He himself was present, but escaped with his staff.⁴

General Butler immediately reporting the circumstances to General Hampton, scouts were sent out to locate the

³Off. War Records.

⁴General Kilpatrick's Report, Off. War Records.

enemy, and upon their report Hampton ordered an attack at dawn by his whole command. Kilpatrick reported as follows:

"Hampton had marched all day and rested his men about three miles from Colonel Jordan's position at two o'clock in the morning, and just before daylight charged my position with three divisions of cavalry, Humes', Allen's and Butler's. Hampton led the centre division (Butler's) and in less than a minute had driven back my people and taken possession of my headquarters, captured the artillery, and the whole command was fleeing before the most formidable cavalry charge I ever have witnessed. Colonel Spencer and a large proportion of my staff were virtually taken prisoners."⁵ Hampton was not in the fight, in person.

General Wheeler in his report says:⁶ "On the night of the 9th came upon Kilpatrick's camp, which I reconnoitred with General Hampton, and at daylight (March 10), pursuant to orders, I took command of my own and Butler's cavalry and charged into the enemy's camp, and after a severe fight of some two hours, secured some 350 prisoners. At one time we had the enemy's artillery and wagons in our possession; the wagons were cut down and the mules driven off. Though we were finally compelled to withdraw, the attack was a decided success on our part. In withdrawing, I remained with Dibrell's brigade, to cover the movement."⁷ Among my wounded were General Humes, commanding division, and Hannon and Hagan, commanding brigades, besides every field-officer in Hagan's brigade. Generals Allen and Ashby had horses shot under them."

The following letter is from a sergeant of Captain Shannon's scouts, Wheeler's corps. It is a graphic description of war, in the last analysis of the science:

"We marched all day and until about twelve o'clock at night, when we halted not far from the camp of General

⁵Off. War Records, Series 1, vol. xlvii, P. 1, p. 861.

⁶Supra, p. 1130.

⁷Sherman's infantry was near and Hampton withdrew because the noise of battle had drawn to the field a heavy infantry support, 1200 strong to Kilpatrick.

Kilpatrick. Shannon's scouts were in the lead. General Wheeler came forward and ordered Captain A. M. Shannon to go forward and capture the pickets, and to do so if possible without firing a gun. This was done. We captured the videttes and then the reserve. Captain Shannon was anxious to locate General Kilpatrick's headquarters and to locate 118 of our men, who were prisoners. He sent Joe Rogers and B. Peebles into the camp, on foot, and they located both. As Rogers and Peebles came back, they brought two horses each. General Wheeler rode up just as they came back. Captain Shannon told him two of his men had just been in the enemy's camp, and General Wheeler had them tell him all about where the prisoners were and where General Kilpatrick's headquarters were; he seemed greatly astonished that they could bring out the horses.

"He then ordered Captain Shannon to place his scouts around, close up as pickets, which was done. Burke, from 11th Texas, and myself were placed on the right, about one hundred yards from the sleeping enemy.

"While sitting on our horses and keeping a strict watch for any movement, we heard some one coming from the direction of our command on horseback. We sat alert, with our pistols cocked, and waited for him to ride up, as we were too close to the enemy to challenge him. When he rode up, we discovered it was General Wheeler, and as he knew each member of the scout by name, I said to him, 'This is Hardie, general.' His reply was, 'Where are the enemy?' I said (pointing to them), 'There they are, general.' He said, 'What! That close and all asleep! Won't we have a picnic at daylight!' The scouts were at liberty to talk freely to General Wheeler. I asked: 'What brigade is in front, general?' He replied: "Alabama brigade.' I said, 'I wish it was Texas brigade, because they are armed with six shooters.' His answer was, 'The Texas brigade is just behind the Alabama, and will charge on the right.'

"The Alabama brigade, with General Wheeler, the escort and Shannon's scouts, charged the centre, where were the

headquarters of Kilpatrick, and where our men were that were held as prisoners.

"The Texas brigade ran into a marsh and had to turn back, but they turned to the left and soon came up and joined in with the others, but still a little to the right of the Alabama brigade.

"As soon as our men who were prisoners heard the yelling and the shots, they told the guards, 'You had better save yourselves! That is Wheeler charging,' and the guard dashed away and the prisoners began to help themselves to arms, horses and whatever they wanted. They secured all of General Kilpatrick's personal horses. He had two fine stallions, one a little spotted horse and the other a large black. The spotted one was secured by a man by the name of Scales, of 51st Alabama regiment, who also got General Kilpatrick's sword and pistols. The scouts made up a purse and bought the spotted stallion, sword and pistols from Scales and made General Wheeler a present of them. One of the 3d Alabama regiment secured the black stallion and General Allan got him, I suppose by purchase.

"General Kilpatrick's disaster would have been far greater if the Texas brigade had not run into the morass or marsh and 1200 infantry near by come to General Kilpatrick's aid. We captured a great many prisoners, horses and camp equipage. General Kilpatrick left his hat, coat, pants, sword and pistols, all of which the scouts and the Alabama brigade secured. Butler's division charged on our right, and entered the enemy's camp as soon as we did.

"A. F. HARDIE."⁸

At dawn General Kilpatrick's bugler stood with his lips upon the instrument, in another moment to sound reveille. At the same instant General Wheeler, on his white horse, with Bugler Pelote by his side, trotting at the head of the column out of the shadow of the forest a hundred yards

⁸Hardee's Itinerary speaks of this brilliant fight as that of "Wheeler's and Butler's." Johnston's Narrative sustains this character for it. General Lee reported it as Wheeler's and Butler's fight.

away, called "Charge!" An Alabama lad on the front declares, in his mature years: "To-day I feel the blood tingle in my finger-tips as that bugle call returns to me."

Kilpatrick's bugler never sounded. The Confederates dashed headlong into the sleeping camp, along its entire front. General Kilpatrick sprang from his bed and, in dishabille, leaped at a run through a low window.

Captain Samuel Wilds Pegues, of the 3d Alabama, recalled that as he reined his horse in the first onset, at the outer door of Kilpatrick's headquarters, the little farmhouse, a beautiful young Irish woman, in scanty night-dress, threw herself into the opening, piteously pleading for protection. She had come out of Savannah, under the protection of General Kilpatrick, and along the march, through the rice plantations of South Carolina, a gentleman's family coach and horses had been appropriated for her use. Pegues assured the frightened girl that Confederate soldiers would not harm her, urging that she retire to the security of her chamber. Kilpatrick confesses in his official report he "retreated afoot." He might have added, "and without hat or the usual clothing of a commander." After the war, Senator Butler met General Kilpatrick in Washington. The general explained that it was his habit to walk out about bugle call in the morning to see his horses fed, and on the morning of the fight he had just touched ground when he discovered the presence of the Confederates and had no time to put his clothes on!

Five hundred yards away, General Kilpatrick, afoot, found his men, a disorganized mass, estopped from farther flight by the impassable morass. News of the horrors of Andersonville had brought out many an oath from them to die fighting. Very gallantly he appealed to them to follow him back in effort to recapture the camp. Kilpatrick says all this time the Confederates were busy plundering.

It is certain that they drove off the artillery horses and wagon mules they had captured with the camp, and cut the gun-carriages and the wagons down. They did not turn the captured guns on the foe, crowded helplessly

on the border of the impenetrable morass, because they did not propose, by the noise of the powder explosion to invite the untimely arrival of Sherman's near-by infantry upon the scene.

Kilpatrick led his men back and the fighting grew warm. He remounted some of his guns and used them with excellent effect. Besides Wheeler's wounded, Major Ivey F. Lewis, from Marengo county, Alabama, commanding the Jeff Davis legion, of Butler's division, was disabled by a rifle ball, and also his horse. General Butler's brother, of his staff, lost an arm. Indeed, the routed foe returned to the fight in splendid form. Wheeler, on the front as usual, met his noted scout, Lieutenant H. C. Reynolds, there and calling him, said: "Come with me, for I have neither staff nor escort." As the two rode side by side in the woods, Reynolds remarked: "General, this is hot work and we are right between the enemy's and our own line of fire; hadn't you better move a little to one side or the other?" "No, we are in the right place," was the ready answer; and both men rode on, cheering as they went.

Reynolds was keen to fight. Two days before, he had been captured, and after being dismounted, had been stripped of his fine (captured) boots, and given instead a pair of brogans. With blistered feet, he was made to walk immediately behind General Kilpatrick's carriage, wherein the general rode, with his head in the lap of the young lady. The prisoner escaped in time for the battle. Smarting now under the indignities of his brief captivity, as the fight progressed he saw one of the enemy's officers ride out alone, seeming to challenge to personal combat. Reynolds promptly rode to a meeting. In easy pistol range, both halted and the duel began. When both had almost exhausted their loads, a final shot from Reynolds unhorsed his antagonist, mortally wounded. The horse of the dead invader was taken to the Confederate camp and there identified as one from whose back the same officer had shot a Confederate early in the fray. A pistol used by the same invader, fallen, is now an archive in the Alabama depository.

At Fayetteville, General Butler and Lieutenant E. Thornton Tayloe lay in the same bed, in a private residence, while their clothes were being cleaned. They were half dozing and half awake to the fierce resounding blows of the clothes paddle. Suddenly a soldier pushed his head through the door, yelling: "The Yankees! The Yankees!" Both men sprang from the bed, innocent of all raiment. The night was cold. Each man had retained his hat, boots and overcoat. Quickly donning all that was left to them they mounted for the sequel. On the street Hardee took command of the few Confederates present, by accident. Hampton came up, claiming his right to command mounted men. Hardee yielded. The Yankees were driven out of town, except the dead and wounded. Hampton killed two with his own hand. Lieutenant H. C. Reynolds was one of the handful in this adventure.

The rival armies now came in daily contact. The Confederates fought with their old-time determination. Not so with the marauding host of Sherman. Since November 15th, now four months past, the invading army had been a licensed mob, tramping through a defenseless country, employed only in brutal depredations upon property and cowardly assaults upon the helpless inhabitants. Hardee had intrenched four miles south of Averysboro. On March 17th there began a series of conflicts which lasted for five days and closed the fighting of the two historic armies.

Two of Sherman's corps, the 14th and 20th, had driven in the Confederate cavalry on the 15th. At seven o'clock on the 16th Hardee's works were attacked by the same enemy. They flanked him and he withdrew four hundred yards to a better position. They moved against him from time to time all day on the 16th, and were each time repulsed. Hardee lost 500 killed and wounded. Sherman, with fourfold his force, reported 484 killed and wounded, a wonderfully small loss to have turned his troops away. They began to flank Hardee, and that night he retired without molestation toward Smithfield. Prisoners, however, reported Sherman had lost more than 3000 men.

General Johnston's headquarters were now taken at Ben-

tonville. The enemy were several miles nearer to that point than was Hardee. Hardee, however, marched well at night and came up by next morning. The army now moved out and formed line of battle on the edge of an old plantation, recently under cultivation. The enemy advanced and threw up entrenchments. They attacked Hoke's front, but were repulsed. They then attacked Stewart and met a like fate.

The combatant armies were only a few hundred yards apart, Hardee commanding the right of the Confederates and Bragg the left. General Johnston ordered the charge. The first three hundred yards were passed over at quick step, then the charge began. Before the Confederates fired the enemy broke, abandoning their first line to fall back upon their second. Hardee led the charge upon these works, leaping his horse upon them. The enemy again fled, but rallied in one of the pine thickets common to that section. General Bragg met a stouter resistance and had not advanced so far. General Johnston determined not to continue the battle, as the woods were so thick the troops could not advance in line, but he held the ground until all his wounded were removed. This was March 19th.

On the 20th the invading army was united and moved upon Hoke, behind intrenchments. The fighting continued from noon until night. The Confederates held their ground and the foe withdrew.

On the 21st skirmishing was active. About four o'clock in the evening, the 17th corps, the dashing General Mower commanding, broke through Butler's left,—a thin line. Cumming's Georgia brigade came along. The 8th Texas cavalry was near. Hardee ordered Colonel Henderson to charge the centre of this column and the Texans to charge its left flank. Hampton charged its right flank. While all this was going on, Wheeler assailed. The 17th corps became confused and in a few minutes gave way. While General Hardee led the Texas cavalry in this engagement, his only son, a youth of seventeen years, fell in its ranks.

Between the battlefield and Bentonville was Mill Creek, an unfordable stream with a single wooden bridge available

to the Confederates to connect with their base that village. We shall now relate the last general fight commanded by Wheeler.

Mower's object was to seize the bridge. If he succeeded, undoubtedly the whole of Johnston's army would be cut off and captured. At four o'clock in the evening the enemy, pressing every foot of Johnston's line, led by Mower, had gotten so well into the rear as to capture the Confederate hospitals. It was now that Wheeler came into the action. The foe was advancing at a slow run, confident and boastful. The Texas Rangers charged; Allen's Alabamians charged. General Mower was himself nearly captured. Hardee now sent Walthall's small infantry division to support Wheeler. Wheeler dismounted his men, thus extending Walthall's line. This saved the bridge. The enemy, however, attacked again and fought until night. About midnight, in a cold rain, the army withdrew and retreated. Wheeler was left to protect the rear. The darkness and the heavy timber caused the army to retire slowly and as late as sunrise all had not quit Bentonville. Wheeler dismounted and fought them with the desired result.

April 2d, Wheeler had occupied Raleigh with half his command, but for some reason immediately left the town. Governor Zebulon Vance was discontented.

Sherman had pushed Johnston's hungry army through Raleigh, on toward Greensboro. In passing through the capital of North Carolina the Confederate troops appropriated, without leave, a quantity of commissary and quartermaster stores, the property of the state. The affairs of the Confederacy having come to so low a pass that its army could not be restrained, Governor Zebulon Vance resolved to open a correspondence on his own account with General Sherman. He exhibited his letter to General Hardee without reproof, and he was aware that General Johnston himself knew of its contents before it was sent. He procured the use of a railroad engine and upon this improvised vehicle he mounted a commission of four townsmen of high standing and Dr. Warren, a rich man from

Edenton, a volunteer in the state army. The governor wished to throw the beautiful capital of his state upon the mercy of the on-marching terror, Sherman. He remembered Atlanta and Columbia. General Sherman made oral reply that in his opinion the war was over, and he would not feel compelled to burn Raleigh. General Johnston, for courtesy, informed the president of the governor's act. Mr. Davis at once ordered the arrest of the governor's messengers for irregular use of a flag of truce. Vance wrote in protest of the president's order.

On April 13th. Kilpatrick followed and there was some fighting, favorable to the Confederates.

On the 13th General Wheeler called to him Sergeant A. F. Hardie, of his regular scouts, the youthful son of an Alabama farmer, instructing him to go near Raleigh and find out whether Sherman was moving, and if so in what direction. The sergeant was warned of the extreme peril of the work and instructed to take with him half a dozen of his best associates, so as to fight off any small party that might attempt to interfere. The men were, Sergeant Hardie, privates Eugene DuBose, David Spence, John Clark, Clark Joplin and Alsop. All set out on the afternoon of April 13th. On the way they met the 51st Alabama forage master, Mastin O. Marshall, who asked permission to accompany the expedition. He was forewarned of the peril, but became only the more persistent. Reynolds, the lieutenant of this squad, seems to have been already out riding on the other side of the field.

Hardie and his companions bivouacked the night through, and having acquired the information for which they were sent started out early on the 14th—Good Friday—to carry it to headquarters. The eight rode into the mouth of a lane, lined on either side with a high worm rail fence. When they had advanced a few yards, they beheld at the other end twelve of Kilpatrick's cavalry, equipped in the best style with revolvers and repeating carbines. Instantly Hardie shouted the charge. The seven struck the twelve face to face at full run. In five minutes eleven of the

twelve were *hors de combat*—and not one Confederate bore a scratch! The twelfth man, a sturdy Ohioan, Wolfe by name, escaped, and, turning his horse's head in the direction of his camp, plunged the spurs in with all his might. Eugene DuBose, one of the eight, a young Alabamian, who had returned recently from home with a fresh and fleet horse, dashed off to capture the Ohioan. Drawing up to his side and presenting his pistol, he called aloud, "Surrender!" The fleeing soldier threw the carbine on his pursuer, as his own life was generously given to him. Apart only an arm's length, both horses rushed on at full speed. A rifle ball crashing through his brain, DuBose fell dead. Here was poor return for the gift of life! The immunity, however, of the victor was brief. DuBose's very intelligent horse, seeing his master fall, turned suddenly across the way and stopped, as if to await his recovery, thus forcing Wolfe's horse against the tall fence. At this moment Sergeant Hardie, dashing up, fired upon the enemy, and he fell dead.

Thus fell the last of war's victims in the Army of Tennessee, an Alabamian, from whose state the order to fire the first gun went forth. If it was the cotton planters' war, this was a cotton planter's son, his father's offering.

The noise of the fighting was heard in the enemy camp near-by. Commotion there was visible. It behooved Hardie to rescue his men from imminent peril without delay. The riderless horse, the dead Confederate's arms and effects, were all hastily taken away. As Hardie passed, a negro man, a slave, stood in front of his master's residence gazing upon the wondrous scene. The retreating Confederate called to the humble negro, as he galloped by, "Bury the man in gray!" "Yes, master, I will bury both." He buried both, each in his own corner of the rail fence, one in gray, the other in blue, without regard for the unsolved problem, whether blue or gray was best for him and his posterity. It was the world's belief that for him and his race the shallow graves in the fence corners were filled.

CHAPTER XXII

1865

THE FALL OF THE CONFEDERACY

A few days after the three days' battle at Bentonville, well convinced that the Confederates on his front would not precipitate more fighting, General Sherman left his army, now 108,000 men, under Schofield and embarked by sea to meet Grant at City Point.

The two commanders met President Lincoln there, on board a transport, March 25th-26th. The event, in the simplicity of its outward appearance, was very memorable. The conference stands out in the life of Abraham Lincoln to challenge comparison with the highest refinement of statecraft recorded in the annals of the nations. Daring and self-sacrifice, modesty amidst the evidences of the greatest conquest civilized war had ever known, distinguished in this crisis the acts and words of the victor.

Grant and Sherman argued that the armies of Lee and Johnston would unite at some accidental meeting-place, south of Petersburg and north of Raleigh, to make a final fight. Mr. Davis believed Lee and Johnston were able to fight, separately, and so instructed both.

Lincoln declared the war was over, and instructed his leaders of great armies so to accept the situation. There must be no more unnecessary bloodshed.¹ He now presented for the first time to the two commanders those immortal terms of surrender of the Confederate armies which it was his desire to enforce.

We shall bring into view evidence of the thorough preparation of Mr. Lincoln's mind, upon the lines of his statecraft, in this momentous phenomenon of the civil situation. His purpose was as comprehensive as the blessing of

¹Memoirs of General Sherman.

liberty in America. He rose to his opportunity, without precedent in the books. He had won and was ready to lay down the fruits of success.

The substance of his thought was, a few weeks later, revealed to a citizen of Alabama by Mr. Lincoln in the privacy of direct intercourse in the president's office, in the White House. A practice had grown up of authoritative exchange of cotton for manufactures from the United States, in Confederate ports, and at the time here considered, the commander of the army of occupation at New Orleans had a steamer in the port of Mobile engaged in this kind of traffic. William Crawford Bibb was one of the substantial citizens of Alabama, a cotton planter and gentleman of rare force and intelligence. Driving with Governor Watts, near Montgomery, Mr. Bibb inquired if arrangements had been made to provide Alabama troops in the Confederate service with shoes and clothing. The governor had not effected such provision, nor could he discover ways and means to that end. Bibb solicited authority to repair, in person, to Washington for a personal interview with Mr. Lincoln. Supplied with gold for traveling, he set out at the very time that Lincoln was holding conference with Grant and Sherman on the boat, as just stated.

After many adventures, arrests and hair-breadth escapes, Mr. Bibb reached Washington and on April 12th was received in private audience by the president in his office. A few moments after the Alabamian was ushered into the apartment, the president strode in, shook hands cordially, threw himself into a great chair and swung both legs over an arm. Richmond was then in the hands of Grant. The Alabamian's mission was malapropos. After some unimportant speech, he rose to depart. The president seized the lapels of his coat with an order to be seated.

On the previous afternoon Mr. Lincoln had returned from a visit to Richmond. That night, the 11th, a vast concourse, with bands of music, assembled in the grounds of the White House to serenade him in honor of Lee's surrender two days before.

The president spoke from a balcony and Bibb, then a

stranger, stood immediately in front of him an eager listener. After the short speech, Assistant Secretary of State Frederick Seward read from a window a proclamation prepared by the president to be published in the newspapers the following morning. The proclamation read to the public, the night of April 11th, made announcement of the executive policy in relation to the states that had comprised the defunct Confederacy. Congress was not in session and would not be until December. All of those states that would resume their suspended relations with the government of the United States had the right to do so and their restoration would be complete, without further process of action anywhere. Representatives and senators from each would be received in Congress.

At the interview the forenoon of the 12th, the president at once remarked to Bibb that he had seen him in the crowd of the previous evening—a remarkable instance of his memory for faces. Bibb replied that he was present at the reading of the proclamation, but that he had failed to find it in the morning papers. The president explained that the delay was only for a few days; that certain political advisers had visited him late at night and counseled repression for a brief time, but that the paper would be published. Lincoln was assassinated on the 14th and the proclamation never was published.²

Mr. Lincoln instructed Grant and Sherman at City Point March 25th-26th, that Confederate soldiers surrendering to them must be permitted to go to their homes and live under the laws of the state governments, respectively, then in authority, and under the laws of the United States.

Bibb asked: "What state governments?"

"The state governments you now have."

Bibb asked: "What, Mr. President, is to become of our southern leaders?"

The president answered: "I will pardon Jeff Davis himself if he asks for it."

"What, Mr. President, is the effect of your Emancipation Proclamation?"

²Bibb's narrative in Atlanta Sunny South and in pamphlet.

"That refers only to slaves within our military lines, of course. I have no power to free slaves. Congress has submitted an article of amendment, and if that is adopted, all slaves are free. If I could I would pay for them."

In these two demonstrations of statecraft the fame of Abraham Lincoln resides. First, his intuitive sense of the peril of disintegration of that fraction of the United States territory left to him, March 4, 1861, led him to the masterly determination to try war with the Confederacy, as a saving power. Next, when the Confederacy had fought its battle and lost, Lincoln alone understood that the immediate return of the southern states to Congress, with all their original influence there, was necessary to save the common country from the Charles Sumner, the Ben Wade, the Thaddeus Stevens radicalism and ruin.

News of the evacuation of Richmond, on the night of April 2d, led General Johnston to assume that General Lee was moving the Army of Northern Virginia to the long-advised junction with him. He communicated with the president and secretary of war, refugees at Danville, but they were unable to give information of Lee's plans. Other official correspondence with officers near that army did not intimate that General Lee had been forced from the trenches at Petersburg, held so masterfully, so long and at such unparalleled cost.

In a few days soldiers bearing paroles, and many without, began to pass the Army of Tennessee. The Army of Northern Virginia was no more.

The president arrived at Greensboro, North Carolina, and on April 12th called Johnston and Beauregard into conference at his office. Messrs. Benjamin, Mallory and Reagan, of the Cabinet, were in attendance. On the box car, out from Richmond, Secretary of State Benjamin rode a fugitive. A number of other prominent persons were passengers in the same rude vehicle. "The end of the Confederacy," was common remark. Secretary Benjamin

smiled and smiled, dissenting. The Confederacy had just begun the fight for life!⁴

At the meeting the president took the floor and with sanguine air announced that in two or three weeks he would have a large army ready. His explanation of his purpose to raise the army and continue the fight was the limit of the subject-matter of the meeting. He expressed no desire to hear from the two famous commanders he had summoned, or either of them. At that time the three arsenals, one at Richmond, another in North Carolina and the third at Selma, Alabama, were in the hands of the enemy. All arms in General Lee's department had been surrendered. Thirteen hundred returned soldiers from the wrecked Army of Tennessee had no arms. The powder-mill at Augusta was in the hands of the enemy. The enemy had possession of every state capital and practically of every railroad in the south. It was the unanimous opinion of the Cabinet, except the smiling Secretary Benjamin, that the Confederacy had fallen.

Another meeting with the generals was called by the president, the Cabinet again present. The president now invited the generals to offer for his information a statement of the comparative strength of the armies of the two countries. They made the estimate, Grant 180,000; Sherman, 110,000; Canby 60,000; grand total, 350,000, subject to immediate and indefinite increase. Johnston gave his forces present as 20,000 infantry and artillery and 5000 cavalry. Maury had a few thousand at Mobile. Secretary Benjamin delivered a speech, contending for continuance of the war. Johnston remarked that continuance of the war involved only the interest of the southern population, liable to feel the presence of the enemy; that the invader would not be hurt in any way by war. The president seemed irritated. He did not see what he could do but fight. In good faith, he had sent three eminent citizens to Hampton Roads to propose peace and the recognition of the Confederacy. His proposal had been treated with

⁴Recollections of Captain James Taylor Jones, 4th Alabama.

scorn. The president of the Confederacy had no constitutional authority to dissolve its government.

General Johnston, having studied the political history of countries in earlier life, now came forward with some examples where military commanders had found it convenient to initiate negotiations for peace. The president rejected that suggestion. After some more deliberation, the president sketched a letter to be sent to General Sherman. In this letter there was only the suggestion of a truce, in order that the "civil authorities" might negotiate for peace. Mr. Mallory, in clear hand, copied, General Johnston signed and General Hampton sent the letter through the lines. Delay on the part of the enemy caused the reply to tarry on the way until the 16th. The reply consented to a meeting of Johnston with Sherman, the date, the 17th. Hampton instructed Butler to select the place. He chose a plain farmhouse, owned and occupied by Bennett, between the picket lines of the two armies. Sherman had his horse and the horses of his cavalry escort put on the cars, to be debarked at the railroad station indicated. As he continued on the ride, he met General Johnston, whom he had never seen before. The two generals went into the Bennett house, while a number of officers of high rank sat on stick chairs in the front yard discussing various topics. Howard and M. C. Butler discussed politics and the war. Presently Sherman offered to Johnston a telegram, which he explained had been delivered to him on the way, its contents being unknown until then to any one. Johnston read, and while reading became intensely absorbed. Great drops of perspiration formed on his forehead. Returning the bit of paper, he declared his sense of the awe-inspiring consequences of the contents,—news of the assassination of President Lincoln.

General Sherman now for the first time discovered the unexpected part the "civil authorities" occupied in the original letter of Johnston, dictated by Mr. Davis. He could proceed no farther. He had no power to recognize the political claims of the Confederacy. The deliberations of the 17th were prolonged until the 18th, when the fol-

lowing "Agreement" was reached and copy sent to each president.

"MEMORANDUM, OR BASIS OF AGREEMENT

"Made this 18th day of April, A. D., 1865, near Durham's station, in the state of North Carolina, by and between General Joseph E. Johnston, commanding the Confederate Army, and Major-General William T. Sherman, commanding the Army of the United States in North Carolina, both present:

"1. The contending armies now in the field to maintain their *status quo* until notice is given by the commanding general of any one to its opponents, and reasonable time—say forty-eight (48) hours—allowed.

"2. The Confederate armies now in existence to be disbanded and conducted to their several State capitals, there to deposit their arms and public property in the State arsenal; and each officer and man to execute and file an agreement to cease from acts of war, and to abide the action of the State and Federal authority. The number of arms and munitions of war to be reported to the chief of ordnance at Washington city, subject to the future action of the Congress of the United States, and, in the meantime, to be used solely to maintain peace and order within the borders of the States respectively.

"3. The recognition, by the Executive of the United States of the several State governments, on their officers and legislatures taking the oath prescribed by the Constitution of the United States, and, where conflicting State governments have resulted from the war, the legitimacy of all shall be submitted to the Supreme Court of the United States.

"4. The reestablishment of all the federal courts in the several States, with powers as defined by the Constitution and laws of Congress.

"5. The people and inhabitants of all the States to be guaranteed, so far as the Executive can, their political rights and franchises, as well as their rights of person

and property, as defined by the Constitution of the United States and of the States respectively.

"6. The Executive authority of the United States not to disturb any of the people by reason of the late war, so long as they live in peace and quiet, abstain from acts of armed hostility, and obey the laws in existence at their place of residence.

"7. In general terms—the war to cease; a general amnesty, so far as the Executive of the United States can command, on condition of the disbandment of the Confederate armies, the distribution of arms, and the resumption of peaceful pursuits by the officers and men hitherto composing said armies.

"Not being fully empowered by our respective principles to fulfill these terms, we individually and officially pledge ourselves promptly to obtain the necessary authority, and to carry out the above programme.

	"W T SHERMAN,
"J. E. JOHNSTON,	"Major-General Command-
"General Commanding Con-	ing Army of the United
federate Armies in N. C."	States in N. C."

The prolonging of the meeting within the narrow walls of the Bennett house, through the day of the 17th until far into the hours of the 18th, was due in the main to the persistent effort of General Johnston to include President Davis in such terms as the parties to the "Agreement" might arrive at. This very question had been considered by President Lincoln in the conference on the steamboat. Sherman asked what disposition should be made of the president of the Confederacy, when his soldiers might receive paroles. Lincoln told an anecdote, which, interpreted, meant it would relieve him of trouble if the president of the Confederacy should effect a secret escape from the country. Some of Sherman's officers in North Carolina suggested to their commander to procure a steamer at Wilmington for this comfortable exit. So Sherman denied Johnston's appeal to include the president.

A copy of the "Agreement" of April 18th was sent promptly to each president, ex-officio commander-in-chief. President Davis signified to Johnston his approval, from Charlotte, April 24th, and on the same day President Johnson notified Sherman, from Washington, of his disapproval and gave orders for the mobilization of the army and battle.

Hearing from Sherman of his orders from Washington, Johnston by telegraph asked for instructions from President Davis. Mr. Davis ordered that the infantry be disbanded, to meet again at a point the general might designate; that the 5000 cavalry be led on retreat, along a line, back into the upper part of South Carolina, and that as many soldiers of the other arms of the service as could be mounted on draught horses be added to the cavalry. To this force also should be added "some light artillery." The president had collected already in the upper districts (counties) of South Carolina, along a hypothetical line of march, 700,000 rations.

General Johnston did not obey this order. He had taken the opinion of all the cabinet, except Mr. Benjamin, that the army should be surrendered. He had no saddles for the "draught horses" which the president presupposed available for mounts for infantry, not even such horses, in appreciable numbers. Kilpatrick was on his front with as large a cavalry force as his; Stoneman was on his rear with a cavalry as large as his; Wilson, with at least five times his cavalry, was in Georgia, nearer the depots of supplies, in South Carolina, than was Johnston in North Carolina. Moreover, Sheridan was within a few days' march, in Virginia with 10,000 cavalry, capable of overtaking him as soon as his departure became known.

Nevertheless, the army was not prepared to surrender. General Hampton wrote elaborately and most earnestly to the president at Charlotte, protesting against the step. "Give me 20,000 mounted men," he said, "and I will drive Sherman out of North Carolina." He warned the president of the fearful catastrophe ahead when the enemy should distribute themselves, unmolested, through the south. He predicted they would set up civil government in all

the states by negro suffrage, that race equality would be ordained, that confiscation of property would be general and that white inhabitancy would be impossible. General W W Allen, of Wheeler's corps, heard that surrender was brewing and wrote an earnest letter to General Wheeler in protest.

General Johnston paid no attention to the president's order to retreat. He had a meeting with Sherman, within the forty-eight-hour limit that President Johnson had fixed for the termination of the armistice of the 18th. Sherman protested against further and useless war; Johnston assented.

On April 26th Sherman allowed Johnston substantially the terms Grant had given Lee. Johnston desired to include all territory and armies of the Confederacy, on the ground that the Confederate government was dissolved already and in flight. This suggestion of dissolution of his authority appeared to Mr Davis in the light of offense against his office. It was insubordination. Lee's situation, the president averred, was altogether different from Johnston's. Lee could not retreat to supplies; Johnston might. Lee had no hope of reinforcements. If Johnston had fallen back, southward, Richard Taylor had some troops in Alabama; Forrest had troops in Alabama; there were troops beyond the Mississippi. The president believed a show of resistance would restore the army and "would have led the United States authorities to do as Mr. Lincoln had indicated—give any terms (sic) which might be found necessary speedily to terminate the existing war."⁵

General Johnston contended that Mr. Lincoln had never expressed the least hope or desire to give "any terms" which might be found necessary speedily to terminate the war. On the contrary, he had rejected, at Hampton Roads, in the most emphatic and persistent manner and words Mr. Davis' suggestion of terms of peace. When Mr. Davis condemned the terms of Johnston's surrender of the 26th, on the same terms of Lee's surrender, he knew

⁵Rise and Fall of the Confederate Government, 2: 693.

that the "Agreement" of April 18th had been repudiated by the Washington government, because of its strict consistency with Mr. Lincoln's instructions to Sherman. There was no intermediate ground possible between the "Agreement," repudiated, and the convention of the 26th, accepted.

Mr. Davis, after years of undisturbed contemplation, in an autobiographical monograph, seeking to establish a historical contrast, wrote: "General Lee was compelled to surrender; General Johnston consented to surrender."⁶ The compulsion of Lee by Grant, on April 9th, preceded and actually added to the compulsion of Johnston by Sherman, April 26th. The privilege of consent was never allowed by the enemy to either, nor was there ground to charge against the two Confederate generals that one, more than the other, would have consented in advance of the extremity of compulsion.

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The sons and daughters of the Confederate statesmen, through all the generations, and of the citizen soldiers who took heed of their teaching, will forever remember that "a people without pride of ancestry are a people without hope of posterity." The ages of human records offer no page more resplendent with the imprimatur of statecraft, and none so glorious in tales of war, as that which stands boldly out to time in the name of the Confederacy. We consider not men in high places, and their claims to fame. Our theme is, the resources of life within the Confederacy and the influence of trusted administrators.

Montgomery Blair, of Maryland, on his own motion, by consent of President Lincoln, went to Richmond in January, 1865, to attempt to persuade President Davis to see that the war was over.

President Lincoln met three Confederate commissioners on board a United States ship in Hampton Roads.

Mr. Davis' assent to Mr. Blair's proposition of conference, to terminate the war, was conceded because of the

⁶Confederate Veteran, May, 1907.

opportunity thus to be gained to plead with the United States to recognize the independence of the Confederacy, that peace might follow. He had no thought of ultimate failure of war.

When the three commissioners—Vice-President Stephens, Senator Hunter, of Virginia, and Assistant Secretary of War John A. Campbell—reported failure of the scheme, the president promptly accepted the inferential challenge to more war. He would conquer by arms the right denied to him by council and counsellors. In proud and dauntless spirit he appealed to the country. News came of the fall of Fort Fisher and the closing of the port of Wilmington, the last on the Confederate coast. The president reported to Congress, in defiant tones, the repulse of his commissioners. Two nights after their sad return, he rose to address a public meeting in the African church, a favorite place for large assemblies. All ages and both sexes flocked to hear him. A day or two later, he addressed a vast multitude in the open air on the same topic. The people might be saved if they willed it, he cried in passionate tones. Humiliation and degradation were afar off if the leaders and the press would have it so!

"Rather than wear dishonored chains,
Or captives follow the trophied car,
Give us again the wildness of our woods,
The fierce freedom of our forefathers."

Strong and wise men heard and were silent; the army, in destitution, heard and received fresh inspiration; the battle-maimed and aged, the fair women of the land, heard and wondered. "They refuse even to listen to proposals for the only peace possible between us—a peace which recognizes the impassable gulf which divides us," he cried.

Never before were a people united as the southern people. God had blessed them with a degree of success disproportionate to their strength. Let them continue to give their all to the defense of inalienable rights, to the protection of happy homes and sacred altars.

Was there a glance here upon the quick-coming time when every state government should be overthrown and the

ballot controlled by soldiery, when unlettered Africans should sit in the seats of judgment, when alien thieves should hold the keys to the treasuries of states, counties and towns, when miscegenation should stand with the sanction of written codes!

We shall see, presently, how the president took refuge in flight. He rode out from Charlotte, North Carolina, with a cavalry guard that was soon dismissed. He rode with a friend or two through South Carolina. The exercise under the warming sun exciting thirst, he drew rein in front of a farmer's cottage, to ask for a drink of cool water. The wife, with an infant at her side, answered the call. "Are you not President Davis?" she asked. "This boy is named for you, sir." The president took from his pocket a small gold coin, begging the mother to keep it for her son as from him. As the small party turned back upon the highway, Mr. Davis remarked: "That was all the money I had in the world."

The journey, mounted, continued to Abbeville, South Carolina, a small, ancient town. All doors, and all hearts were thrown wide open to the travellers. After an hour's rest, Mr. Davis called the last council of war, for him. He presided by his own appointment. The secretary of war, the magnificent Breckinridge, was there; the head of the president's staff, the soldierly Braxton Bragg, was there, and besides these, five others, bearing rank as brigadiers. Mr. Davis appeared in high spirits. He had encountered an exigency of supreme peril, and in that atmosphere he was most resourceful. If there was demoralization around him, he was untouched by the fact. "He looked the very personification of high and undaunted courage." He now asked each of the seven general officers to give voice to his individual understanding of military conditions. All said the same—the Confederacy had fallen beyond hope of restoration. Mr. Davis became indignant. Was it possible southern men would consent to the degradation of their country? Let him gather about him but twenty-five

hundred brave men and true and he would dispel the prevailing panic; soon he would have thousands like them at his command, and so prolong the war that liberty would be rescued. There was no answer. The error of a great man rested heavily upon his battle-scarred veterans, who listened in respectful silence. "When he arose to leave the room, he had lost his erect bearing, his face was pale and he faltered so much in his step that he was compelled to lean upon General Breckinridge. It was a sad sight to men who felt toward him as we did. I will venture to say that nothing he subsequently endured equalled the bitterness of that moment."^s

The surrender was made. Neither Hampton nor Wheeler was included. Large numbers of men absented themselves. General Johnston delivered a touching farewell to the army. General Wheeler published the following order:

"FAREWELL ADDRESS

"HEADQUARTERS CAVALRY CORPS,
"April 29, 1865.

✓ "Gallant Comrades:

"You have fought your battles; your task is done. During a four years' struggle for liberty you have exhibited courage, fortitude and devotion: you are the sole victors of more than two hundred severely contested fields: you have participated in more than a thousand successful conflicts of arms. You are heroes, veterans, patriots. The bones of your comrades mark battlefields upon the soil of Kentucky, Tennessee, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Alabama and Mississippi; you have done all that human exertion could accomplish.

"In bidding you adieu, I desire to tender my thanks for your gallantry in battle, your fortitude under suffering, and your devotion at all times to the holy cause you have done so much to maintain. I desire also to express my gratitude

^sMorgan's Cavalry, 438-9, by Basil W. Duke. General Duke, the author, was one of the five brigadiers present in council.

for the kind feeling you have seen fit to extend toward myself and to invoke upon you the blessings of our heavenly Father, to whom we must always look in the hour of distress.

"Brethren in the cause of freedom, comrades in arms, I bid you farewell. "J WHEELER."

General Johnston returned to friends in Virginia, a hero in the minds of all the southern people.

General Wheeler prepared to cross the Mississippi, with many others. He sent some of his baggage to his sister, a maiden of Augusta. Among the articles was a gray coat he had worn in the battles and storms of two eventful years. "I will continue to fight until driven from the last foot of Confederate soil," were his parting words to his adjutant, Major W. E. Wailes. His father yet lived in Augusta, but he must pass him by again, unseen.

General Wheeler rode out from Washington, Georgia, westward through the woods, with a few of his old men. From day to day others joined him. He dismissed them because they made a company too large to escape observation and too small to defend themselves. A reward was offered by the authorities at Washington of \$100,000 for capture of Mr. Davis. The country was being scoured by Wilson's cavalry in search of that distinguished prey. Wheeler and his small party were betrayed by a negro and captured in bivouac in broad daylight. He was arrested and taken north with Mr. Davis, Mr. Stephens and other distinguished men, and consigned to solitary confinement in Fort Delaware. After some months' confinement, he was released on order of the secretary of war.

Coming south, he stopped at a hotel at Nashville. While lying in his room on a sick bed, two officers, unknown to him, who had just been discharged from the Army of the United States, forcibly entered his room and assaulted him. He fought them off. General Thomas, in command of the post, reprimanded the assailants severely, but could inflict no punishment as they had already been discharged from the army.

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